



STUDY OF ECA's SPORTSUNITED PROGRAMS:

SPORTS VISITOR PROGRAM

SPORTS GRANTS PROGRAM

SPORTS ENVOY PROGRAM

December 2013

Prepared by:

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Executive Summary

Overview of Programs and Study

The SportsUnited Division of the Office of Citizen Exchanges, within the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), coordinates a variety of programs that use sports as a vehicle for engaging critical youth audiences, as well as for promoting cross-cultural learning and mutual understanding between Americans and people in other parts of the world through people-to-people engagement. Programs provide foreign coaches and sports program administrators with career development opportunities in areas such as the inclusion of women and girls, underserved youth, minorities and people with disabilities; team management; and playing skills. Programs for youth athletes provide participants with training in conflict resolution, an introduction to sports activities for people with disabilities, leadership skills, sports training sessions, and teambuilding activities that are geared towards empowering youth to be active participants in their communities.

This study—part of a larger evaluation that includes a total of eight culture and sports programs and encompasses fieldwork in five countries—evaluates three SportsUnited programs: Sports Visitor, Sports Grants and Sports Envoy. While the evaluation period for this study includes the years 2002 to 2009, the coverage years vary by program: 2006 to 2009 for Sports Visitors, 2002 to 2009 for Sports Grants and 2005 to 2009 for Sports Envoys.

Program Descriptions

Sports Visitor Program: Coaches, underserved youth athletes and sports program administrators from around the world come to the United States for an educational exchange focused on a particular sport, most often soccer, basketball or baseball. Most programs are designed for 12–13 participants from a single country, although a few have involved individuals from multiple countries. In all cases, participants are nominated by U.S. embassies. During the evaluation period (2006 to 2009 for the Sports Visitor Program), 27 programs were held with participants from 28 countries, spanning all major regions of the world; a total of 376 individuals participated in one of these exchanges. Key program themes included leadership, teambuilding, conflict resolution, diversity, sports fitness, nutrition and health, and strength and fitness training.

The exchanges typically last about 2 weeks and involve activities in the greater Washington, DC, area and one or more other American cities, selected for their relevance to the sport. Activities include participating in workshops, clinics and camps; visiting schools and sports-related nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and attending professional, collegiate and high school sporting events. In addition, participants visit U.S. historical sites and have opportunities to experience American daily life and culture.

Sports Grants Program: U.S. nonprofit organizations receive grants to manage exchange programs for underserved youth athletes and/or coaches and administrators of youth sports. Grants are provided for both one-way and two-way exchanges, with American participants traveling abroad and/or foreign participants coming to the United States. During the evaluation

period (2002–2009), a total of 57 grants were implemented by 38 NGOs in 35 countries with a total of 325 American and 660 foreign participants, spanning all major regions of the world. These grants covered four thematic areas: training coaches, youth sports management, youth with disabilities, and sports and health.

Sports Envoy Program: Sports Envoys are professional U.S. athletes or coaches who travel overseas to lead sports clinics and workshops for underserved youth athletes (aged 7–17 years) and/or coaches and administrators of youth sports, to participate in community outreach and to engage youth in dialogue on the importance of leadership and respect for diversity. Envoys travel in pairs, teams or individually to one or more countries. During the evaluation period (2005–2009 for the Envoy programs), 46 programs were held in 34 countries, spanning all major regions of the world, with 70¹ Sports Envoys. Although various sports were represented, the vast majority of programs focused on basketball. Female Envoys traveled to 28 countries, often to provide programming specifically for girls.

All three programs have grown substantially since the period of this evaluation. The Sports Visitor Program has increased its country coverage by 229 percent in the last 4 years (i.e., 2010–2013), and the number of Sports Visitor participants has grown 142 percent over the previous 4 years (i.e., 2006–2009). From 2010 to 2013, the Sports Grants program has grown at a much faster pace than before—in just 4 years, nearly as many individuals (85%) have participated in the program as in the previous 8 years (2002–2009). Finally, over the past 4 years, many more American coaches and players (173% more) have volunteered their time and expertise to serve as Sports Envoys, reaching 59 percent more countries than in the previous 5 years (2005–2009).

Purpose of the Evaluation

This study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to assess the extent to which the SportsUnited programs have been effective in achieving the following key goals:

- ***Mutual understanding.*** Foreign participants develop more positive views of the United States and the American people through greater understanding of U.S. culture and society.
- ***Cross-cultural exchange and learning.*** Participants have opportunities for cultural exchange and learn about key American values such as creativity, freedom of expression, liberty of thought, tolerance and diversity.
- ***Local institutional development, growth and capacity.*** Local institutions, organizations and communities in participants' home countries benefit from program activities through participants' new knowledge, skills and connections with U.S. organizations.
- ***Inclusion.*** Underserved youth, minorities and/or women and girls are included in programming.

¹ Fifteen Sports Envoys completed more than one visit during this period, for a total of 85 Envoy visits.

- ***Program reach and impact.*** The benefits and messages of the program extend beyond the program participants to larger audiences through the media and participants sharing their experiences with others.
- ***Personal and professional development of program participants.*** Participants learn and apply new sports skills and/or life skills, as well as develop networks that allow them to excel personally and professionally.

Evaluation Methodology

The data collection and analysis included the following components:

- ***Document review.*** The evaluation team reviewed program documents from ECA's SportsUnited Division and implementing partner organizations. Documents included internal administrative documents, grant proposals, annual reports and program itineraries for each of the three programs.
- ***Interviews with key stakeholders.*** The team conducted interviews with program managers in the SportsUnited Division and with implementing partner organizations in order to gather information about each program's history, goals and objectives, as well as to gain a better understanding of the partner organizations. This information was useful for developing program logic models and evaluation research questions.
- ***Online surveys.*** Surveys were developed for each program and were administered via the web-based tool Zoomerang from September to December of 2011. The Sports Visitor and Sports Grants surveys were translated into key languages and were sent to past participants around the world; the Sports Envoy survey was provided in English only and was sent to American Sports Envoys.

The evaluation team developed cross-tabulations to determine if variations in responses were associated with respondents' region/country, gender, sport and/or year of program participation. In addition, the team coded and analyzed the data from the open-ended questions based on major themes.

- ***Interviews in the field.*** Evaluation team members visited South Africa (November–December 2010) and China (February 2011), where they conducted individual and group interviews with program participants and key informants (such as U.S. embassy staff), as well as collected additional program documentation. The team members conducted most interviews face to face, and a few by telephone.

After the site visits, the team conducted a content analysis of responses to each interview question, using an inductive analytical process to uncover patterns of responses and to identify themes and categories of responses within themes. Then, the team assessed variations in responses with reference to respondents' country, gender, program themes and year of program participation.

The study results are presented according to the roles of the participants: (1) visitors to the United States (foreign participants in the Sports Visitor and Sports Grants programs) and (2) Envoys (Americans) who traveled overseas. Both segments of the report rely primarily on the

online surveys, supported and illustrated by the interviews. Program descriptions are based on program documents made available to the evaluation team.

Findings: Sports Visitor and Sports Grants Programs

The findings in this section are divided into three parts: (1) changes in attitudes of all foreign program participants (youth athletes, coaches and sports program administrators); (2) program results specific to coaches and administrators; and (3) program results specific to youth athletes.

1) All Foreign Participants: Youth Athletes, Coaches and Sports Program Administrators

The following findings reflect the results for all respondents to the Sports Visitor and Sports Grants surveys: youth athletes, coaches and administrators.

a. Mutual Understanding

The vast majority of Sports Visitor and Sports Grants survey respondents reported that their views of the U.S. Government and the American people (87% and 92%, respectively) were more positive after participating in the program. In particular, more than half of the respondents (58%) characterized their views of the American people as “much more favorable” after the program.

b. Learning about the United States

Overall

Whereas only 62 percent of respondents indicated that they had “moderate” or “extensive” knowledge about the United States overall before attending the program, this figure jumped to more than 90 percent after the program.

American Culture

At least three-quarters of respondents reported “moderate” or “extensive” knowledge of daily life in the United States (91%), American popular culture (77%) and American history (75%) after attending the program, compared to 51 percent or less before the program.

Before the program, only a quarter of the respondents deemed their knowledge of American sports “extensive”; after the program, this figure jumped to 57 percent.

Democratic and American Values

Respondents’ knowledge of voluntary community service and philanthropy in the United States increased dramatically: three-quarters of respondents indicated “moderate” or “extensive” knowledge in this area after the program, compared to just over a quarter before the program.

Respondents gained substantial knowledge of democratic values in the United States—freedom of speech and the press, ethnic diversity and religious diversity. The percentages of respondents reporting “extensive” knowledge of these areas, respectively, increased from 21 percent before the program to 45 percent afterwards; from 9 percent to 34 percent; and from 7 percent to 28 percent.

U.S. Institutions

Respondents reported gaining increased knowledge of the U.S. educational and political systems. In particular, only half of the respondents reported having “moderate” or “extensive” knowledge of U.S. education before the program, but this figure leaped to 89 percent afterwards.

c. Sharing Experiences with Others

After returning home, the vast majority of respondents (98%) shared their experiences and/or new knowledge with others, especially friends and community members.

2) Coaches and Sports Program Administrators

The following findings emerged from the survey regarding coaches and administrators specifically.

a. What They Learned

The majority of coaches and administrators who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey reported that their knowledge had improved “to a great extent” in four areas: (1) teamwork/teambuilding (65%), (2) leadership skills (59%), (3) sports management and administration (56%), and (4) coaching techniques and methods (54%).

b. What They Have Accomplished

At least half of the coaches and administrators who filled out a survey identified the following skill and knowledge areas among their most important program accomplishments:

- Improved coaching skills (72%)
- Improved ability to organize, plan and manage sports teams and programs (59%)
- Learning how sports can address problems faced by youth (50%)

c. Community Work

The majority of respondents (coaches and administrators) became more involved in their communities after participating in the program. In particular, most of them (69%) initiated new activities and/or assumed a leadership role, and close to half (46%) also established new organizations, clubs or teams. Notably, some of these new initiatives have fulfilled ECA’s goal of including underserved groups, such as girls, people with disabilities and rural communities.

d. Work in the School/University

More than 60 percent of respondents (coaches and administrators) applied their new knowledge or skills in the school where they work, either by initiating new activities or projects (67%) and/or by taking on an increased leadership role (61%).

e. Career Advancement and Personal Growth

Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (coaches and administrators) attained greater job responsibility (74%) and/or initiated new activities or projects in their current job (72%). In addition, almost all of them (93%) set new goals for themselves after the program.

3) Youth Athletes

The following findings emerged from the survey regarding underserved youth athletes specifically (aged 15–20 years at the time of the program).

a. What They Learned

All nine youth athletes who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey reported that the program had improved their knowledge in the following areas:

1. Teamwork/teambuilding
2. Leadership skills
3. Conflict resolution skills
4. Strength and conditioning
5. Playing techniques

In fact, the majority (at least six respondents) reported that their knowledge of the first three areas had increased “to a great extent.”

b. What They Have Accomplished

Nearly all the youth athletes (eight of nine) cited improved playing skills and techniques as an important accomplishment resulting from their program participation.

Most of the youth athletes (at least seven) have been able to apply the technical and social skills they acquired on the program, such as improved playing techniques, teamwork/teambuilding, leadership skills and conflict resolution skills.

c. Projects at School and in the Community

After participating in the program, the majority of youth athletes assumed a leadership role in their school (eight of nine) and/or community (six of nine), and nearly all of them (eight of nine) initiated new activities at their school.

d. Personal Growth

Most of the youth athletes (seven of nine) reported that their self-confidence had “increased greatly” as a result of their program experience. In addition, all nine youth athletes became more focused on their own education and set new goals for themselves as a result of the program.

e. Sharing Experiences with Others

After returning home, most of the youth athletes (seven of nine) gave media interviews in which they shared their program experience.

f. Contact with Americans and Others

Most of the youth athletes (seven of nine) reported having contact with American students and players they had met on the program since returning home.

Findings: Sports Envoy Program

The majority of the 11 Sports Envoys who responded to the survey assessed the program as “very effective” in achieving two of its objectives: creating goodwill (9) and improving attitudes and beliefs about the American people (7). In addition, the majority of respondents (8) considered the program either “effective” or “very effective” at creating awareness of American culture and values.

Sports Envoy respondents reported that they had conveyed the following key program messages during their visits overseas: commitment, equal opportunity, shared goals and needs, and the value of teamwork and communication in all aspects of life.

The Sports Envoy programs established professional relationships and contacts that resulted in specific multiplier effects. For example, an interviewee in China reported that some schools initiated new softball programs after a Baseball Envoy’s visit in 2007.

Most of the Sports Envoy respondents (9 of 11) reported having maintained contact with the people and organizations they encountered during their visits overseas. Furthermore, several of them (5 of 11) reported providing further support (i.e., educational, technical, financial or material) to these contacts after the program.

Conclusions

All three SportsUnited programs covered in this study have had a profound impact on respondents. Foreign program participants who came to the United States with either a Sports Visitor or Sports Grants program reported that their exchange experience had deepened their understanding of U.S. culture, people and values, as well as provided them with new skills and knowledge that they were able to apply back home. At the same time, responding American Sports Envoys who traveled overseas communicated key American values, such as the importance of tolerance and inclusion, to the individuals and organizations who participated in their activities. They also promoted a more active role for women and girls in sports. In some cases, local organizations were inspired by the Envoy visits to establish or to increase sports programs.

I. Introduction

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) has been managing sports exchanges since 2002, and in 2006 the SportsUnited Division in the Office of Citizen Exchanges was created. The impetus for this stemmed from the concepts that sports programs could be an avenue for transcending national, cultural or even linguistic boundaries, and that sports are a unique vehicle for cross-cultural learning and mutual understanding. These programs would be transformative both for the individuals participating and for their home communities, schools or sports associations.

These programs were designed with the intent of offering opportunities within the field of athletics—whether coaching, managing sports programs, athletic development, creating infrastructure for sports, or inclusion of women and girls, underserved youth and minorities.

Three SportsUnited programs are covered in this evaluation: Sports Visitor, Sports Grants and Sports Envoy.

A. Overview of SportsUnited Programs

Table 1 below captures the basic features of each of the three programs. Sections on each program include more extensive program descriptions and provide a portrait of the program during the years covered by the evaluation.

We present findings on the effectiveness of these programs on the foreign youth athletes, coaches and sports program administrators who participated in either the Sports Visitor Program or in one of the Sports Grants Programs. We also review the Sports Envoy Program from the viewpoint of the U.S. citizens who served as Envoys overseas.



President Barack Obama plays basketball with visiting Russian youth during a sports diplomacy exchange in 2010.
(Source: exchanges.state.gov/sports/programs)

Table 1. SportsUnited Program Features

Sports Envoy Program	Sports Visitor Program	Sports Grants Program
<p><i>Current and retired professional U.S. athletes or coaches volunteer as goodwill ambassadors for the United States. The program is conducted with the collaboration of U.S. national sports leagues and the U.S. Olympic Committee.</i></p> <p>Envoys—athletes or coaches, normally one male and one female—travel to a single country for a 4- to 5-day program. Some Envoys travel to more than one country.</p> <p>A typical Envoy visit includes clinics and workshops with youth, coaches and sports administrators. Visits include drills and teambuilding activities.</p> <p>Athletes engage youth in dialogue on the importance of education, positive health practices and respect for diversity.</p> <p>Envoys engage with leaders of the host country government, educators and the local business community.</p>	<p><i>Small groups of coaches, youth athletes and sports program administrators travel to the United States from around the world for a 2-week educational exchange program related to a particular sport. Participants are nominated by U.S. embassies overseas.</i></p> <p>Sports Visitor programs include sessions on nutrition, strength and conditioning, gender equity in sports, sports and disability, and teambuilding, along with technical training. Special emphasis is placed on the visitors’ development of personal action plans so that they can apply their experiences and newly learned skills once they return home.</p> <p>Participants attend collegiate sporting events in the United States and visit American historical sites.</p>	<p><i>U.S. nonprofit organizations manage exchange programs for youth participants, coaches and sports administrators. Grants are both one-way and two-way exchanges, with American participants traveling abroad and foreign participants coming to the United States.</i></p> <p>Grants programs target underserved youth athletes 7–17 years old and/or coaches and administrators of youth sports.</p> <p>Grants covered four thematic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training sports coaches • Youth sports management exchanges • Youth with disabilities • Sports and health

B. Purpose of the Evaluation

This study assesses the effectiveness of three of ECA's SportsUnited exchange programs in achieving several major goals. These goals were explored in depth during the course of the evaluation, as will be explained in Section II, Evaluation Methodology. Some of the goals are specific to the SportsUnited programs, while others reflect broader State Department priorities and ECA Bureau goals.

These goals reflect the wide-ranging nature of the SportsUnited programs, as well as specific elements of each program.

1. Mutual understanding.

To determine if there has been improvement in understanding, attitudes and beliefs concerning the United States and the American people.

2. Cross-cultural exchange and learning.

To assess whether there have been opportunities for cultural exchange and learning. In particular, to see if American values such as creativity, freedom of expression, freedom of political expression, liberty of thought, tolerance and diversity were communicated on the programs.

3. Local institutional development, growth and capacity.

To determine if local institutions, organizations and communities have benefited from program activities through the knowledge and skills gained by SportsUnited participants and through linkages with U.S. organizations.

4. Inclusion.

To see if underserved youth, minorities, and women and girls have been included in programming.

5. Program reach and impact.

To see if the benefits and messages of the program have extended beyond the program participants to larger audiences through the media and participants sharing their experiences with families, peers, communities and local organizations.

6. Personal and professional development of program participants.

To assess if participants have learned and applied new sports skills and/or life skills, and whether the exchange experience has provided participants with networks that will allow them to excel personally and professionally.

II. Evaluation Methodology

A. Evaluation Design

This study is part of a larger evaluation that includes a total of eight culture and sports programs and encompasses fieldwork in five countries. This study focuses on the three SportsUnited programs and encompasses two country site visits. The evaluation team used both qualitative and quantitative approaches for data collection and data analysis to assess the outcomes of the SportsUnited programs. The evaluation covers the years 2002 to 2009, with different coverage years for each of the three SportsUnited programs.²

The principal sources of data and information gathering were the following:

- Review of program documents
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Online surveys
- Interviews in the field with participants

B. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Review of Program Documents and Interviews with Key Stakeholders

The evaluation team reviewed program documents from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and implementing partner organizations, as well as grant proposals, annual reports and program itineraries for each of the three programs. Program itineraries often included brief biographies of each participant, along with a description of specific program components. The team reviewed these documents to gain an understanding of each program's basic features and history.

Subsequently, the evaluation team developed questions for interviews with program managers in ECA's SportsUnited Division and with implementing partner organizations. The team used these interviews to gather program-specific information about the programs' histories, goals and objectives, and about the implementing partner organizations. This information was useful for developing program logic models to illustrate the programs' theory of change and how activities could lead to the achievement of goals and objectives over the short, medium and long term.³ In the process of accumulating this information and developing logic models, the team—in partnership with ECA's Evaluation Division—outlined and refined evaluation research questions that served as the basis for the design of the survey questionnaires and the key informant questions.

² Sports Envoys: 2005–2009, Sports Grants: 2002–2009, Sports Visitors: 2006–2009.

³ The annex presents the logic models for each of the three programs.

Online Surveys

Participants received surveys tailored specifically to the SportsUnited program they attended during the years 2002 to 2009.⁴ The survey questions are linked to broad State Department and ECA Bureau goals, program-specific objectives and the program logic models that were developed for each of the three programs. The Evaluation Division reviewed and approved the surveys, and then submitted them to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the 1995 Paperwork Reduction Act for public comment, final review and approval.

English is not a requirement for participation in either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants programs; therefore, the evaluation team had to consider an array of languages before administering these surveys. The team had each of these surveys translated into a few key languages spoken by large numbers of program participants, as shown in Table 2, and respondents were able to choose between English or one of these languages.⁵ For the Sports Envoy survey, however, the team provided the survey only in English, as the Sports Envoys are Americans.

Table 2. Languages of the Online Surveys

Sports Visitor Program	Sports Grants Program⁶	Sports Envoy Program
English, Arabic, Mandarin, Spanish, and Swahili	English, Arabic, Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish and Vietnamese	English

The evaluation team administered the surveys through a web-based survey tool, Zoomerang, and designed them so that participants could respond anonymously. Prior to the launch of each program's survey, the team sent an introductory email to program participants, informing them that a survey would be forthcoming and requesting their participation.⁷ The surveys were open for 3 months, from mid-September to mid-December 2011. During this time, the evaluation team sent three reminder emails to participants—either in English or in one of the other survey languages, as indicated above—requesting that they complete the survey.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the number of participants per program to whom surveys were sent, as well as the number and percentage of actual survey respondents by program.

⁴ The evaluation team developed a contact strategy to reach program participants for the online surveys. Contact information was collected from SportsUnited program managers and implementing partner organizations during the first phase of data collection, and via several ECA alumni databases. When available, updated contact information collected during the in-country visits (described under the heading “Interviews in the Field”) was used to transmit the survey links. The contact data was further cleaned and refined based on bounced-back emails received when the online survey link was distributed.

⁵ Completed surveys from those respondents who chose to complete the survey in a language other than English were translated into English.

⁶ The focus of the evaluation is foreign participants. Therefore, American participants in Sports Grants programs were not included in the surveys.

⁷ Due to safety concerns of participants in certain countries, participants from Syria, Libya and Iran were excluded from the survey.

Table 3. Survey Response Rates per Program

ECA SportsUnited Program	# Sent Survey	# of Respondents⁸	% Responding
Sports Envoy	25	11	42%
Sports Visitor	84	42	50%
Sports Grants ⁹	115	30	26%

The evaluation team developed cross-tabulations to determine if variations in responses could be detected based on respondents' region/country, gender, sport and/or year of program participation. The team coded and analyzed the data from the open-ended questions in the surveys based on major themes identified via an examination of patterns in responses.

Interviews in the Field

Given constraints in time and budget, it was not feasible to visit a complete sample of countries that would represent the entire configuration of programs and exchange experiences. Therefore, the evaluation team designed the field interviews to provide contextual understanding of the three SportsUnited programs and to “give life” to the findings of the online surveys. The team selected China and South Africa as the sites for conducting in-depth interviews with program participants in the Sports Visitor and Sports Grants programs, for the following reasons:¹⁰

- All three SportsUnited programs were implemented in South Africa.
- The Sports Visitor Program and the Sports Envoy Program were implemented in China.

Sports Envoys were not interviewed.

A two-person team comprised of a staff member from the Evaluation Division and a MSI evaluation team member traveled to each of the two countries. The ECA team member served as an observer during the interviews. During site visits, the team collected qualitative data through key informant and group interviews, using pre-approved topic guides for each program, as well as collected further program documentation. The team spent 3 weeks in South Africa and 2 weeks in China.

South Africa (November 29–December 17, 2010)

The team traveled to South Africa to conduct interviews with participants from the Sports Visitor Program and the International Sports Grants Initiative, as well as individuals who had been present at Sports Envoy visits in the country. During this field visit, the team interviewed 5 participants from the Sports Visitor Program and 21 participants from the Sports Grants Program, and conducted telephone interviews with 2 coaches and 2 Sports Envoy event

⁸ The number of respondents includes participants who completed the survey and participants who partially completed the survey.

⁹ Due to a survey administration error in the Sports Grants Survey, a small number of respondents reported the program year as 2010. This date remains in the text boxes, as it is not possible to determine in which year the respondent participated in a SportsUnited grant program.

¹⁰ These field visits were part of a larger series of five country field visits for the Evaluation of the Sports and Culture Programs.

organizers. The team also interviewed staff at the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria and the U.S. consulates general in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

China (February 14–27, 2011)

The team traveled to China to interview participants from the Sports Visitor Program and individuals who either had been present at or were knowledgeable of Sports Envoy visits in the country. The team conducted interviews with eight participants in Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai with the help of a translator. Embassy staff in Beijing and staff at the U.S. consulates general in Guangzhou and Shanghai were instrumental in securing some of these interviews and providing context and details regarding the programs in China.

Coding of In-Depth Interviews from the Field

The evaluation team conducted a content analysis of responses to each question posed from the topic guides, using an inductive analytical process for each question to uncover patterns of responses and to identify themes and categories of responses within themes. The team developed coding against categories per theme. Team members reviewed one another's coding using an inter-rater reliability process as a means of increasing the validity of the findings based on correct application of the method developed to conduct the content analysis. Finally, the team assessed variations in responses with reference to respondents' country of residence, gender, year of program participation, and the content of the particular program in which they participated.

C. Important Considerations: Data

Online surveys for each of the three programs were sent to participants with a *verifiable* email address. Likewise, field interviews were conducted with individuals whom the evaluation team was able to locate and who agreed to be interviewed. Although there are youth athletes, coaches and sports program administrators in both the Sports Visitor and the Sports Grants Programs, only one sports program administrator responded to the Sports Visitor Program online survey, while only one youth athlete responded to the Sports Grants Program online survey. For two of the three programs, about one-quarter of the respondents sent in incomplete surveys.¹¹

To maximize the survey data, the information is presented in aggregate form and also is analyzed in two large groups based on the roles of the participants: (1) visitors to the United States: youth athletes, coaches and sports program administrators (foreign participants) and (2) Envoys (Americans) who traveled overseas. The focus of the evaluation is on foreign participants. Therefore, no American participants in Sports Grants programs were surveyed.

Although the findings cannot be generalized to the entire population of participants attending the SportsUnited programs (Sports Envoy, Sports Visitor and Sports Grants Programs), the data do provide important insights into program effectiveness as well as rich contextual detail to aid in understanding the reach and success of these programs.

¹¹ Among the 42 survey respondents for the Sports Visitor Program, 11 individuals (26%) submitted incomplete surveys and/or did not supply important demographic data such as gender or age. Among the 30 survey respondents for the Sports Grants Program survey, 7 individuals (23%) submitted incomplete surveys.

III. Sports Visitor and Sports Grants Programs

This section of the study will cover the Sports Visitor Program and the Sports Grants Program. The data (online survey and field interviews) primarily cover the foreign visitors who traveled to the United States as part of one of these programs.

Since its inception in 2006, the Sports Visitor Program has sought to increase the skills of coaches, sports program administrators and young athletes from countries around the world and to expose them to American culture, values and daily life.

A. Sports Visitors: Program Description

All Sports Visitors are nominated by U.S. embassies overseas and travel to the United States to participate in a 2-week customized program focused on a single sport. The most frequently held programs are soccer, basketball and baseball. In addition, there have been programs for track and field, table tennis, weightlifting, water polo and physical fitness.

The majority of programs involve participants from a single country, although several programs have been tailored to individuals from various countries—notably the 2006 World Cup Youth Delegation, which brought participants from 12 countries, and the 2009 World Baseball Classic, which brought participants from 3 countries. (See Table 4 below.)

In general, program activities are split between the greater Washington, DC, area and one or more other American cities that are chosen for their significance to the specific program. The programs include sessions on nutrition, strength and conditioning, gender equity in sports, sports and disability, and teambuilding, along with technical training. Participants also have the opportunity to attend sporting events in different locations in the United States (e.g., high school athletics, collegiate sports events). While on the program, they receive guided tours of Washington, DC, and a secondary location, where they visit American historical sites and are exposed to American daily life and culture.

Workshops are held on the following topics:

- Leadership
- Teambuilding
- Conflict resolution
- Diversity
- Sports fitness
- Nutrition and health
- Strength and fitness training

Programs are designed to provide all participants with the opportunity to learn about the United States through the lens of sports and to develop lasting relationships with U.S. peers and sports professionals. Sports Visitors are encouraged to apply and to share their knowledge and skills upon return to their countries, as well as to conduct sports clinics. Coaches and youth athletes are

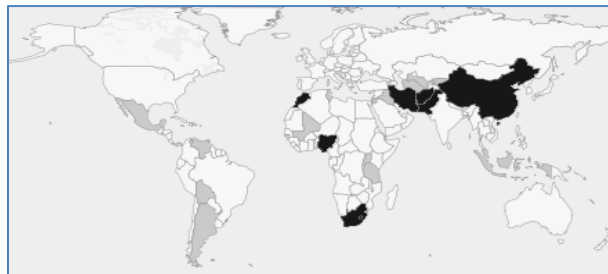
taught how these skills can translate into the development of life skills and academic achievement.

Programs designed for delegations of coaches focus on skills and approaches for successfully coaching youth teams. During their visit, coaches observe team sports and coaching for youth at secondary schools, colleges and universities, as well as at youth centers. Programs designed for sports program administrators have a particular focus on sports management and sports facilities management, and they provide a firsthand look at the unique grassroots, bottom-up nature of sports in the United States. Programs designed for youth athletes focus on skills training, teambuilding, conflict resolution and leadership, and they provide an introduction to sports activities for people with disabilities.

B. Sports Visitors: Program Coverage

Between 2006 and 2009, 27 Sports Visitor programs were held, with a total of 376 participants from 28 countries spanning all major regions of the world (see Table 4 below). While most countries sent visitors to the United States only in one year, a small group of countries in the Near East, Africa, East Asia or South Central Asia were selected to participate in the program on more than one occasion: Afghanistan, China, Iran, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan and South Africa. Visitors from five countries participated in programs designated for women/girls specifically (Afghanistan, Argentina, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco).

Figure 1. Map of Sports Visitor Program Countries



Note: Countries shaded in black sent visitors in more than one year.

Table 4. Sports Visitor Program 2006–2009: Countries & Number of Years with a Program

One Year	Two Years	Three Years
<i>Argentina</i> , Bahrain, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Iraq, <i>Jordan</i> , Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, West Bank	<i>Afghanistan</i> , China, Iran, <i>Morocco</i> , Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa	<i>Lebanon</i>
<p>Countries in blue sent visitors to programs designated for women or girls.</p> <p>The 2006 World Cup Youth Soccer Delegation was a mixed group of boys and girls from the following countries: Bahrain, Bolivia, China, Indonesia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, Uganda and Uzbekistan.</p> <p>The 2009 World Basketball Classic brought participants from the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Panama.</p>		

The size of the sports delegations ranged from 9 to 28 participants. The average number of participants per program was 13, with the majority of programs consisting of 12–13 participants.

During the last 4 years (i.e., 2010–2013), the Sports Visitor Program has expanded substantially. The number of programs has increased to 51, and the country coverage and number of participants have jumped 229 percent and 142 percent, respectively (from 28 countries to 92 countries by 2013, and from 376 participants during the 2006–2009 period to 911 during the years 2010 to 2013).

C. Sports Grants: Program Description

The Sports Grants Program provides grants to U.S. nonprofit organizations to manage exchange programs for underserved youth athletes, coaches and sports administrators.¹² Individual grants are provided for both one-way and two-way exchanges:

- American participants travel abroad *and* foreign participants come to the United States.

American grantees are encouraged to forge partnerships to support institution-to-institution linkages and to facilitate the selection of exchange participants and the implementation of the grant activities in the host country. Each grant is focused on one of several possible themes, determined annually by the SportsUnited Program Office. While the themes may vary slightly from year to year, grants covered four broad areas during the 2002–2009 period:

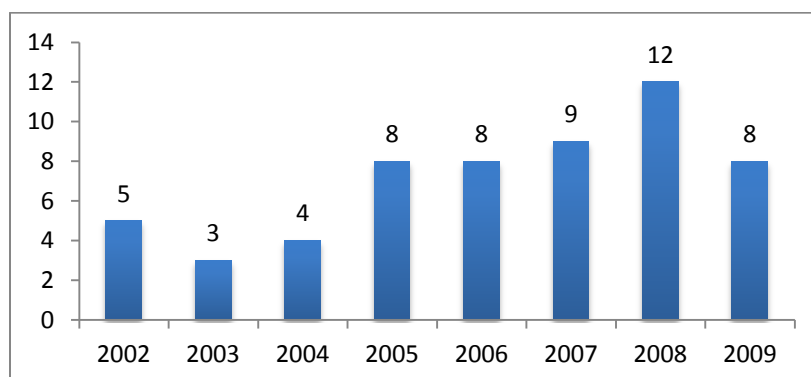
- Training sports coaches
- Youth sports management
- Youth with disabilities
- Sports and health

¹²In selecting participants and implementing programs, grantees are required to follow ECA's policy on diversity in ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socioeconomic status and disability.

D. Sports Grants: Program Coverage

In 2002 the first five Sports Grants were awarded. Between FY 2002 and FY 2009, a total of 57 grants were awarded to 38 different U.S. organizations. These 38 organizations implemented grants that reached 325 American and 660 foreign participants during this period. Figure 2 shows the number of grants awarded each year of the evaluation period.

Figure 2. Number of Grants Awarded Annually



Thirty-five countries received a Sports Grant award between 2002 and 2009. Many countries were included in grants in more than one year (see Table 5).

Figure 3. Map of Sports Grant Countries, 2002–2009



Note: Countries shaded in black were awarded a Sports Grant in more than one year.

Table 5. Sports Grants: 2002–2009

Region	Countries
Africa	Ethiopia, <i>Ghana*</i> , <i>Guinea*</i> , Ivory Coast*, Kenya, <i>Mali*</i> , Nigeria, <i>Senegal*</i> , <i>South Africa*</i> , Uganda
Near East	<i>Algeria*</i> , Bahrain, <i>Egypt*</i> , <i>Iraq</i> , <i>Jordan*</i> , Lebanon, <i>Morocco*</i> , Saudi Arabia*, <i>Tunisia*</i> , <i>West Bank</i>
South Central Asia	Bangladesh, <i>India</i>
East Asia Pacific	<i>China</i> , <i>Indonesia</i> , <i>Malaysia*</i> , Philippines, <i>Thailand</i> , <i>Vietnam</i>
Western Hemisphere	Brazil, Dominican Republic*, Nicaragua*, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela*
Europe	Armenia*, <i>Turkey*</i>
*Multi-country grants Countries in blue indicate an award in more than one year.	

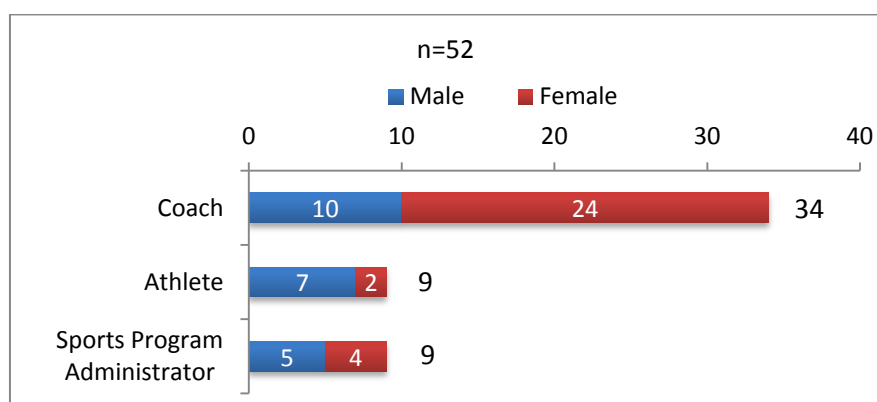
From 2010 through 2013, 35 organizations were awarded a Sports Grant. During the same period, 509 foreign and 336 U.S. individuals participated in a Sports Grant program, substantially increasing the rate of coverage (i.e., 985 individuals participated during the first 8 years of the program, whereas 85 percent of this figure—845 individuals—was attained in just 4 years).

E. Respondent Profile

Of the 72 participants who went online to take the Sports Visitor Program or Sports Grants Program survey, 64 completed most of the survey. Two-thirds of them (43 of 64) were coaches, and the remaining third was split evenly between youth athletes (11) and sports program administrators (10).

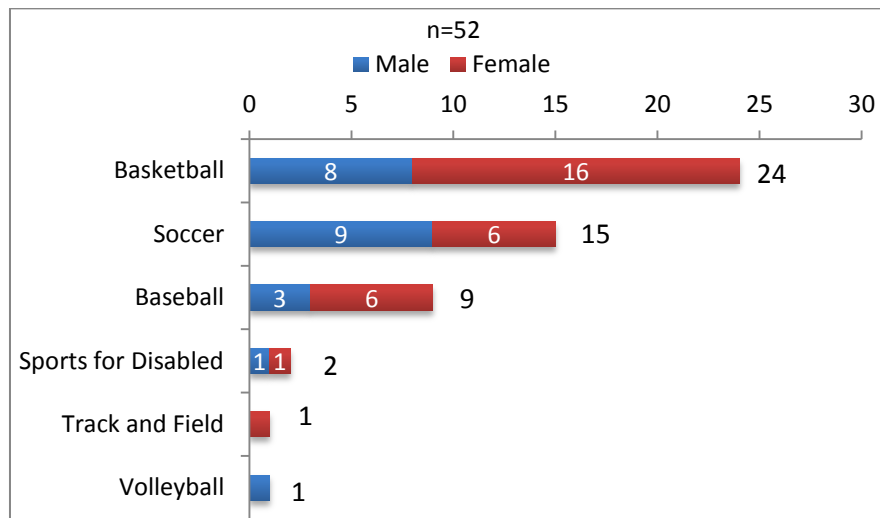
Only 52 survey respondents, however, provided information on gender. Of these, eight in ten (81%) were female. As shown in Figure 4, coaches responding to the survey were predominantly female, whereas more of the youth athletes were male. In fact, female respondents were disproportionately coaches (80% of females versus 45% of male respondents), whereas the male survey respondents were distributed more evenly across the three types of participants (45% coaches, 32% youth athletes and 23% program administrators).

Figure 4. Breakdown of Survey Respondents by Gender and Role



As was the case with the programs themselves, the sports with the highest numbers of survey respondents were basketball (24), soccer (15) and baseball (9). Track and field, sports for people with disabilities and volleyball also had respondents, though in very small numbers. While male respondents were distributed across the three primary sports, more females were concentrated in one sport—53 percent of the female respondents participated in a program for basketball.

Figure 5. Breakdown of Survey Respondents by Gender and Sport



F. Findings: Sports Visitor and Sports Grants Programs

This section of the study discusses the findings from the online surveys and in-depth field interviews conducted with participants in the Sports Visitor and Sports Grants programs, including coaches, sports program administrators and youth athletes. The findings are divided into three separate parts:

- Part 1 examines the extent to which the attitudes of all foreign participants (youth athletes, coaches and sports administrators) toward the United States have changed and summarizes their own assessments of what they learned about the United States by participating in the SportsUnited programs. It also looks at the types of media that participants reported using to stay abreast of sports and sporting events in the United States.
- Part 2 reviews what foreign coaches and administrators learned on the program and what they accomplished after returning home, as well as how they shared their learning and experiences with their colleagues, students, communities, schools and universities. This section also addresses their ongoing contact with Americans they met on the SportsUnited programs.
- Part 3 considers impacts on youth athletes: learning, sharing new ideas, and starting or changing athletics programs at their schools and universities, in addition to their personal growth and development.

1. All Foreign Sports Visitor and Sports Grants Program Participants (Youth Athletes, Coaches and Administrators)¹³

The surveys asked SportsUnited participants to assess how their attitudes toward the United States had changed and how much they had learned about the United States as a result of their program participation.

The first section, “Mutual Understanding,” covers changes in attitudes toward the U.S. Government and the American people, including how survey respondents’ misconceptions of Americans changed.

The second section, “Learning about the United States,” presents what survey respondents learned about American culture and daily life in the United States, as well as democratic values and U.S. institutions (e.g., the political and educational systems).

The third section, “Sharing Experiences with Others,” examines information sharing at home, including with whom most survey respondents shared their program experiences and knowledge gained (e.g., professional colleagues, peers, family, friends and community members).

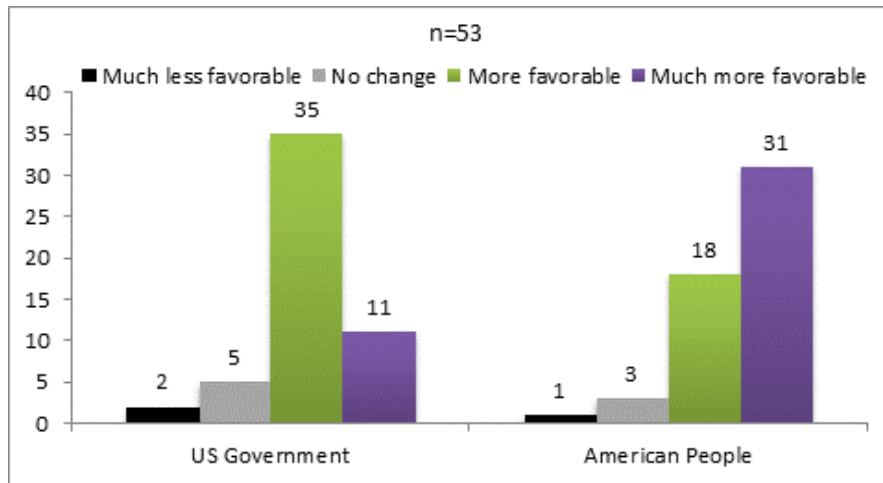
a. Mutual Understanding

All SportsUnited participants who traveled to the United States (i.e., on a Sports Visitor Program or a Sports Grant exchange) were asked to assess how their views of the United States had changed as a result of the program. Almost all survey respondents indicated that their views of the U.S. Government and the American people had improved after their program participation.

- Eighty-seven percent of respondents (46 of 53) reported that their views of the U.S. Government were more favorable.
- Ninety-two percent of respondents (49 of 53) reported more favorable views of the American people; in fact, most of them (31) indicated “much more favorable” views of Americans.

¹³This section of the report presents responses from the 53 individuals who completed this section of the survey. This includes youth athletes, coaches and sports program administrators.

Figure 6. Change in Views of the U.S. Government and the American People



Sports Visitors reflect on changing misconceptions of Americans.

I thought [they] were against Muslims, but when I [got] there, [it] was so different—even in the airport, I was so free.

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Something which surprised me was that I had been told that American people were very wicked, and when I went there I could not believe my eyes—American people are kind and patriotic, they are friendly to strangers and welcoming people, they are not racist, they do not discriminate [against] any religion, and they respect human rights.

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

The people in general were all very nice and sweet towards us. I didn't expect this because of 9/11. ... I am now keen on getting my higher education, as in Pakistan what the media show about American[s] is not true—American[s] are very nice people.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Pakistan (2009), Sports Visitor Program

I never expected them to be enchanted by our presence. They like to meet new cultures, and they were so interested to know about our daily lives.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2007), Sports Visitor Program

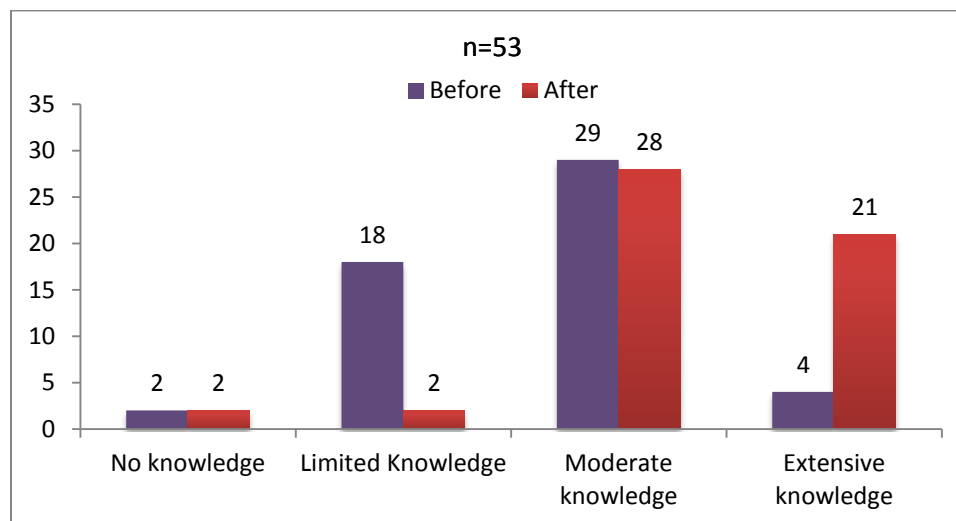
b. Learning about the United States

SportsUnited participants who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey were asked to reflect on their knowledge of American culture, values and U.S. institutions before and after their participation in the program. This section describes what they reported.

Most respondents reported that they had a better understanding of American culture, values and U.S. institutions after the program; in fact, a sizeable number reported having “extensive” knowledge of daily life in the United States, the U.S. educational system and American sports, as well as the values of freedom of speech/press and of volunteerism and philanthropy in the U.S. context.

Additionally, almost all of the survey respondents (49 of 53) reported “moderate” or “extensive” understanding of the United States overall *after* the program—of these, 43 percent (21) rated their knowledge as “extensive.”

Figure 7. United States Overall



Interestingly, 38 percent of respondents (20 of 53) rated their knowledge of the United States *before* the SportsUnited program as non-existent or “limited.”

Across all areas in the surveys, higher numbers of respondents reported being knowledgeable of the United States after participating in the SportsUnited program than before.

However, increases in the numbers reporting knowledge gained were more noticeable for daily life in the United States and American culture than for democratic values or U.S. institutions. At least half of the survey respondents indicated that *prior* to the SportsUnited program, they had been knowledgeable about the following key democratic values and U.S. institutions:

- Free speech and freedom of the press in the United States
- Ethnic and religious diversity in the United States
- Education in the United States
- U.S. political system

On the other hand, few respondents indicated familiarity with or knowledge of voluntary community service and philanthropy in the United States *before* participation in a SportsUnited program, whereas *after* the program most respondents indicated that they had a clear understanding of this American value.

The following three aspects of American culture showed the most gains in terms of numbers of respondents that reported increased knowledge after the program:

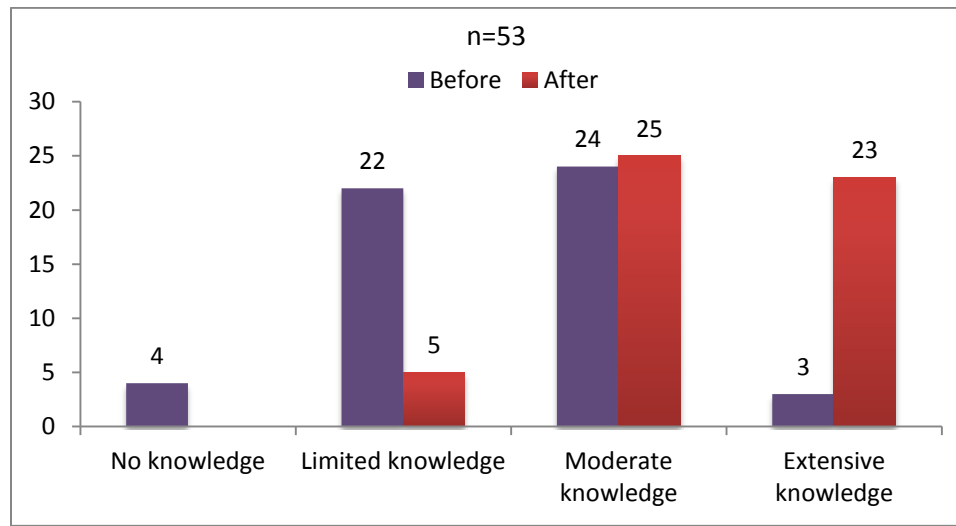
- Daily life in the United States
- American popular culture
- American history

Specifics are discussed below.

1) American Culture

With the exception of American sports, at least half of the survey respondents indicated that they had little or no knowledge of daily life in the United States, American popular culture or American history before participating in a SportsUnited program. However, 75 percent or more indicated that they had “moderate” or “extensive” knowledge in these areas after the program.

Figure 8. Daily Life in the United States



- Forty-nine percent of survey respondents (26 of 53) rated their knowledge of daily life in the United States as “limited” (22) or non-existent (4) *before* the SportsUnited program.
- Almost all the respondents (48 of 53) reported “moderate” to “extensive” knowledge of daily life in the United States *after* the program; 43 percent of respondents (23) rated their knowledge as “extensive.”

Sports Grants participants comment on aspects of American family life and sports.

Staying in American families’ homes [and] sharing in and getting to know, a little, about the culture of the United States with these families—for me, especially, this was the most important part of the program.

Coach, Baseball, Venezuela (2008), Sports Grants Program

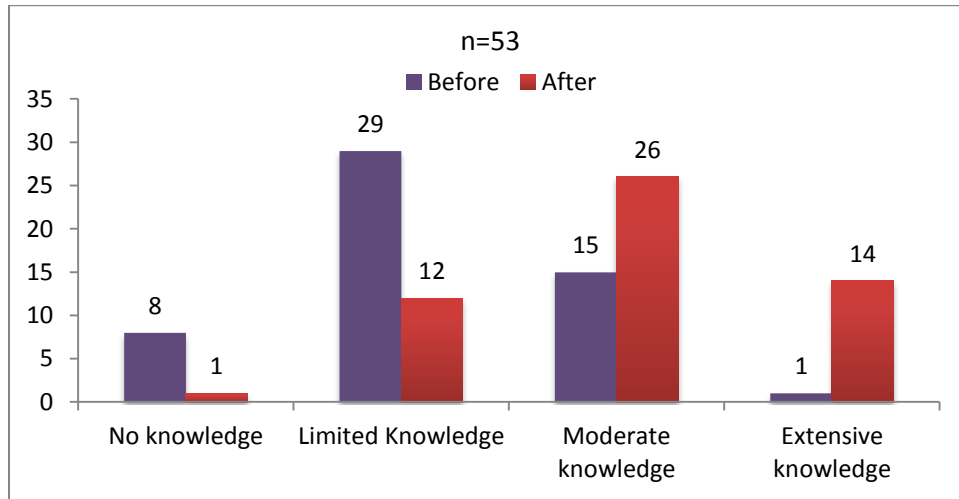
Learning how Americans can keep parents interested and involved in their children's activities was very important to me. We have faced a lot of difficulties regarding that point, and little by little we have brought these parents closer to their children while practicing some sport.

Coach, Baseball, Brazil (2009), Sports Grants Program

Active family participation in their children's sporting development.

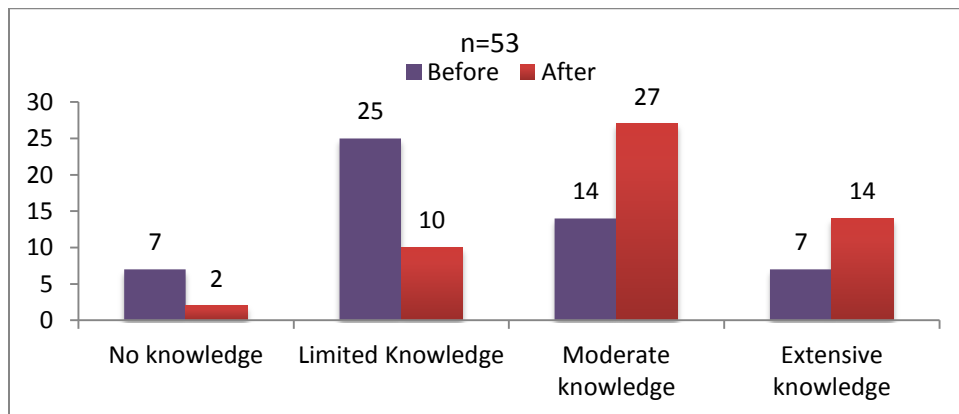
Coach, Soccer, Brazil (2009), Sports Grants Program

Figure 9. American History



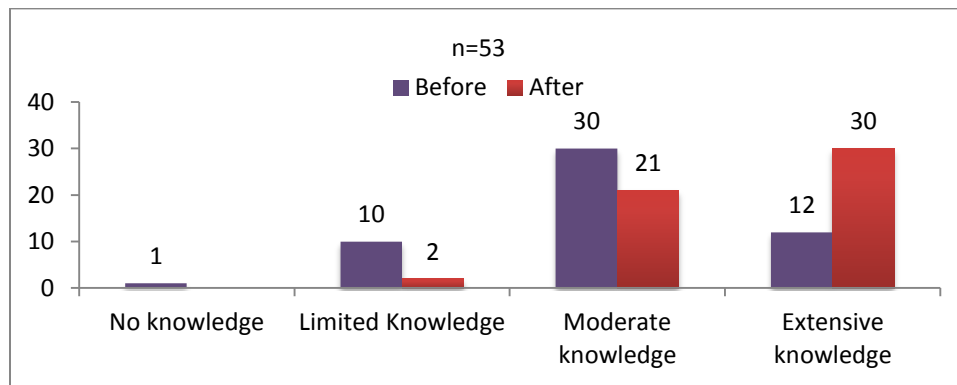
- Seventy percent of the respondents (37 of 53) assessed their knowledge of American history as “limited” (29) or non-existent (8) *before* the program.
- Seventy-five percent of the respondents (40 of 53) rated their knowledge of American history as “moderate” (26) to “extensive” (14) *after* the program.

Figure 10. American Popular Culture



- Unexpectedly, 60 percent of the respondents (32 of 53) indicated that their knowledge of American popular culture was “limited” (25) or non-existent (7) *before* the program.
- More than three-quarters (41 of 53) rated their knowledge of American popular culture as “moderate” (27) to “extensive” (14) *after* the program.

Figure 11. American Sports



- Not unexpectedly, few respondents (11 of 53) reported that they had “limited” or no knowledge of American sports *before* the program.
- Almost all of the respondents (51 of 53) rated their knowledge of American sports as “moderate” or “extensive” *after* the program—57 percent of them (30) indicated that their knowledge was extensive.

Respondents reflect on the structure of sports in the United States.

I see ... how communities play [a] big part to support sports issue[s] in their communities, how major companies support sports issue[s], how the sports facilities are well-organised[.] I see every school and college is [a] center of all sports.

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

[It was a surprise] that mainly all athletic facilities and sports program[s] are not supported by the U.S. Government.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2007), Sports Visitor Program

We have a lot to learn from the USA about the structure of education as a sport, as a community integrator, and as a social feature and professional structure in sports.

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, Brazil (2009), Sports Grants Program

Foreign coaches, sports program administrators and youth athletes were asked to select which types of media they primarily used to keep informed of American sports and culture. At least 70 percent of the survey respondents reported using three principal media, two of which are Internet-based:

- Television
- Sports Web sites
- Social networking sites

The fourth most popular medium (used by 47% of respondents) is also Web-based: Internet photo- and video-sharing sites.

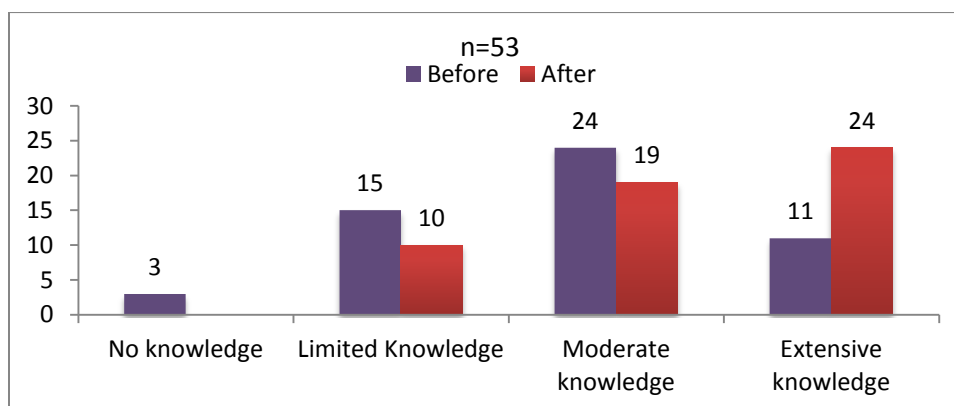
Although some survey respondents reported that they still used print media to keep abreast of American sports and culture, only about 40 percent of them referenced newspapers as a primary source, while about a third (31%) reported relying on books or magazines/journals for such information.

2) Democratic and American Values

At least half of the respondents indicated that they had “moderate” or “extensive” knowledge of key American values—freedom of speech and the press, as well as diversity (both ethnic and religious diversity in the United States)—prior to their participation in a SportsUnited program. This figure increases to roughly 80 percent after the program.

Unlike the other values, most respondents (72%) indicated that they had little or no knowledge of voluntary community service and philanthropy in the United States prior to the program. What they reported after the program is dramatic—three-quarters (75%) indicated “moderate” or “extensive” knowledge in this area.

Figure 12. Freedom of Speech and Press in the United States



- Sixty-six percent of the survey respondents (35 of 53) reported that they had “moderate” (24) or “extensive” (11) knowledge of free speech and freedom of the press in the United States *before* the SportsUnited program.
- Eighty-one percent of respondents (43 of 53) rated their knowledge of free speech and freedom of the press as “moderate” (19) or “extensive” (24) *after* the program.
- After the program, just 19 percent (10 of 53) indicated that they had “limited” knowledge, and no one reported “no knowledge” of freedom of speech and the press.

Sports Visitors reflect on democracy in the United States and globally.

I was astonished of what noble is the democracy; especially I was touched when I read the words of Thomas Jefferson, while visiting the Jefferson Memorial.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2007), Sports Visitor Program

The pragmatic approaches of American democracy to social, political, economic, religious and educational issues and the level of organization of American society.

Coach, Soccer, Nigeria (2009), Sports Visitor Program

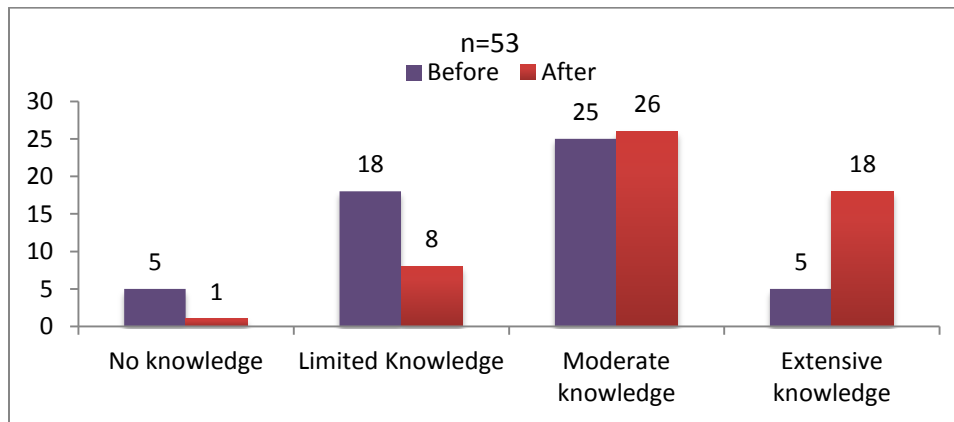
I learned more about laws that are not applied in my country.

Youth Athlete, Basketball, Lebanon (2006), Sports Visitor Program

The freedom of speech and the way that the United States helps different people from different countries.

Coach, Basketball, Saudi Arabia (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Figure 13. Ethnic Diversity in the United States



- Fifty-seven percent of the respondents (30 of 53) indicated that they had “moderate” (25) or “extensive” (5) knowledge of ethnic diversity in the United States *before* the program.
- *After* the program, this figure increased substantially: 83 percent of respondents (44 of 53) reported “moderate” (26) or “extensive” (18) knowledge of ethnic diversity in the United States.

Comments from respondents illustrated that they also learned about diversity and inclusion of all groups, including women/girls and people with disabilities.

[I learned] that the USA is a country of great diversity and success. Of course I knew this before visiting the USA, but I am even more aware of it now.

Sports Program Administrator, Sports for People with Disabilities, Czech Republic (2009), Sports Grants Program

Respondents reflect on gender equality in the United States.

[T]he need of equal gender participation in sports issues at schools and colleges, the human rights for all people of America; I see how disabled [people] get support and participate in sport issue[s]...

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

[The] education system, especially PT associations and Title IX on girls participating [in] the different activities.

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Women exert their rights and are proud of their country.

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

I learned that not only men can excel at sports—that I can achieve my self-set goal of training girls to be leaders. This helps young people to realize the importance of sports, and that girls can be treated the same as men.

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, Nicaragua (2008), Sports Grants Program

Sports Grants participants reflect on inclusion of people with disabilities in the United States.

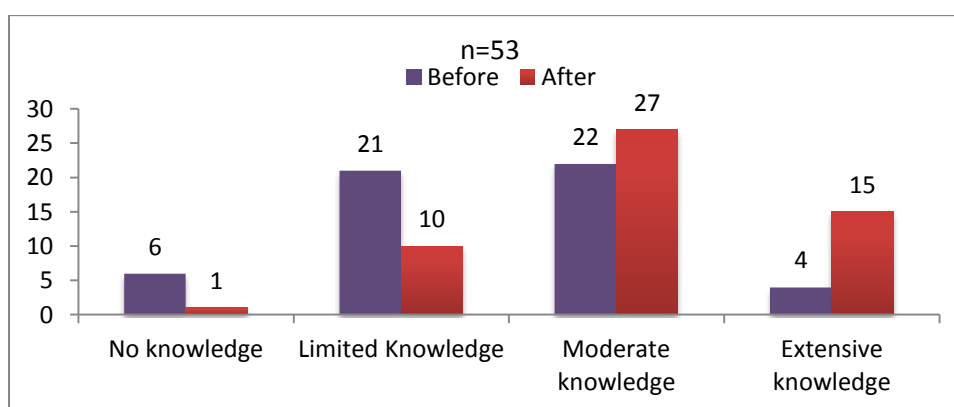
The wheelchair accessibility surprised me. I always [k]new that America is very wheelchair-friendly. But it was a true delight to see disabled individuals with a wide variety of disabilities all over.

Sports Program Administrator, Sports for People with Disabilities, South Africa (2010), Sports Grants Program

[I was surprised by the] importance given to disabled people.

Coach, Basketball, Turkey (2004), Sports Grants Program

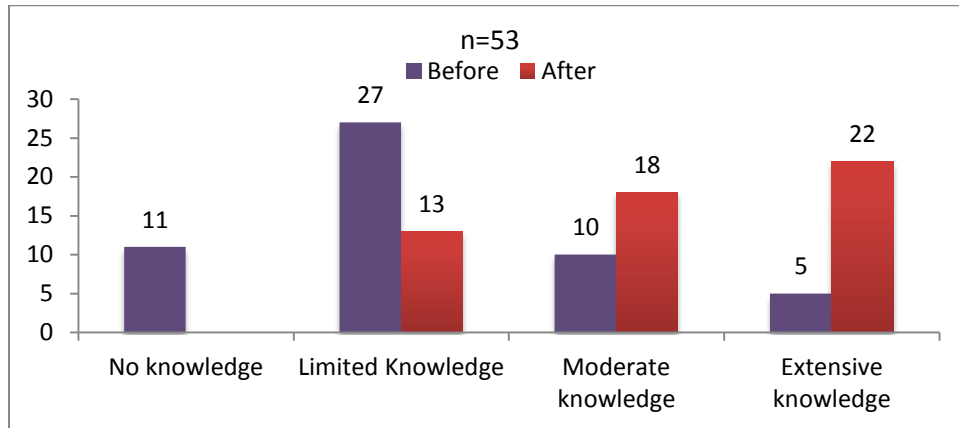
Figure 14. Religious Diversity in the United States



- Forty-nine percent of respondents (26 of 53) indicated that they had “moderate” (22) or “extensive” (4) knowledge of religious diversity in the United States *before* the program.

- Seventy-nine percent (42 of 53) reported “moderate” (27) or “extensive” (15) knowledge of religious diversity in the United States *after* the program.

Figure 15. Volunteerism and Philanthropy in the United States

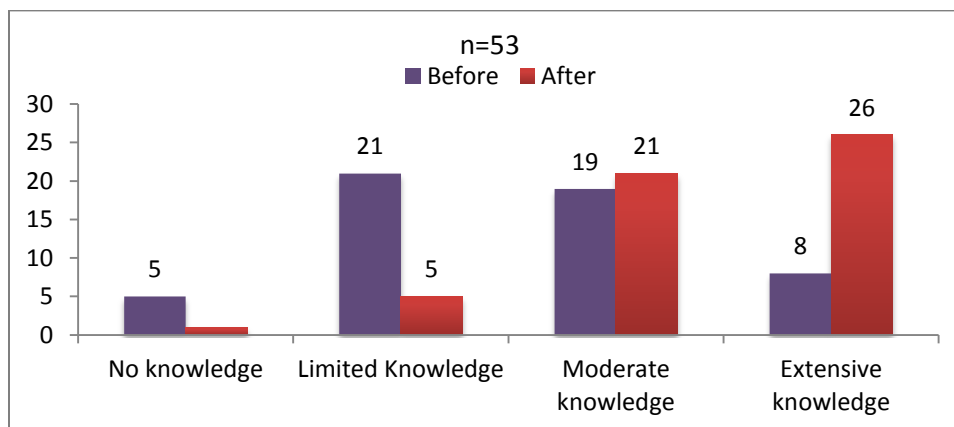


- Seventy-two percent of respondents (38 of 53) reported that they had little (27) to no knowledge (11) of voluntary community service and philanthropy in the United States *before* the program.
- Seventy-five percent (40 of 53) indicated that they had “moderate” (18) or “extensive” (22) knowledge of these aspects of the United States *after* the program.

3) U.S. Institutions

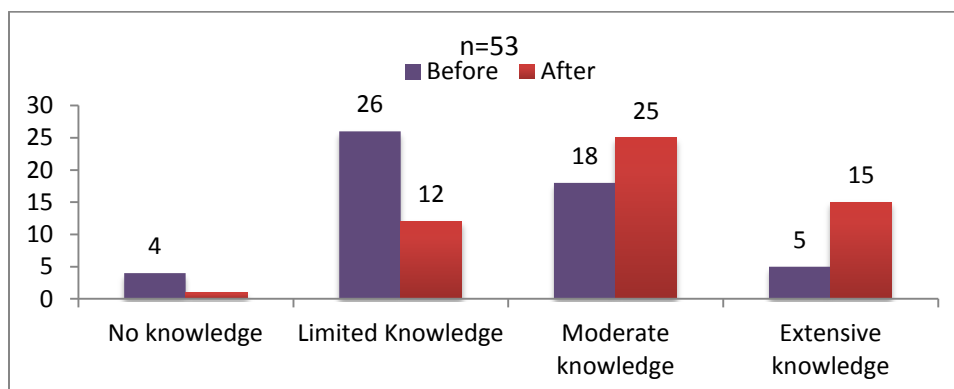
Approximately half the respondents reported that they had “moderate” or “extensive” knowledge of two institutions in the United States—the educational system and the political system—before participating in a SportsUnited program. This figure reaches 75 percent or more after the program; in fact, nearly half the respondents (26 of 53) reported that their knowledge of American education was “extensive.”

Figure 16. Education in the United States



- Fifty-one percent of respondents (27 of 53) reported “moderate” (19) or “extensive” (8) knowledge of education in the United States *before* the program.
- Eighty-nine percent of respondents (47 of 53) rated their knowledge of U.S. education as “moderate” or “extensive” *after* the program; in fact, half of them (26) rated their knowledge as “extensive.”

Figure 17. U.S. Political System



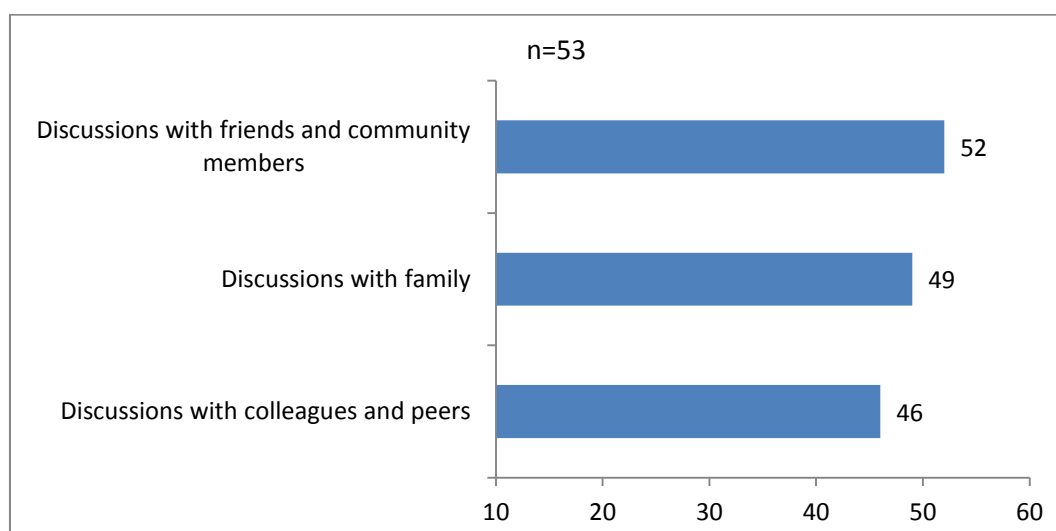
- Forty-three percent of the respondents (23 of 53) indicated that they had “moderate” (18) or “extensive” (5) knowledge about the U.S. political system *before* the program.
- This figure jumped to 75 percent of respondents (40 of 53) *after* the program, with 47 percent (25) reporting “moderate” knowledge and 28 percent (15) reporting “extensive” knowledge.

c. Sharing Experiences with Others

Respondents overwhelmingly have shared their experiences from the SportsUnited programs and the specific knowledge they gained. By communicating with colleagues, peers and members of the community, they have transferred a new understanding of democracy and the rule of law in

the United States, gender equality (more generally and with respect to Title IX) and attempts at inclusion of people with disabilities.

Figure 18. Sharing Experiences or Knowledge Gained



Close to 100 percent of respondents (52 of 53) reported having had discussions with friends and community members, and more than 85 percent reported having had discussions with colleagues/peers and/or family (46 and 49, respectively).

d. Conclusions: All Foreign Sports Visitor and Sports Grants Program Participants

The Sports Visitor and Sports Grants Programs enabled participants to gain or to extend their knowledge of fundamental American values and institutions, and their application and realization in the United States. They experienced community life and volunteering, while gaining a better understanding of subjects such as U.S. history.

For many of the coaches, program administrators and youth athletes who took the online survey, their understanding of American culture and daily life increased, and they gained a new perspective on the role that sports play in both. For most respondents, the program helped them to revise their images and misconceptions of Americans and to concretize their opinions about Americans.

Foreign coaches, program administrators and youth athletes expressed a better understanding of freedom of speech, human rights and dignity, and the importance of inclusion and diversity (i.e., race, religion, gender and physical abilities), and they learned about the political and educational systems in the United States—in addition to the impact that sports has had on inclusion and on education in the United States. Also, a majority of the respondents reported a better understanding of the role of voluntary community service and philanthropy in the United States.

Survey respondents described sports as a unique means of promoting cross-cultural awareness, both within and across nations, irrespective of boundaries.

Sports can supersede the differences that divide us.

I learned that the most important thing sports can do is to bind people together irrespective of their color of skin, cultural background and religion. This helped me a lot in preaching this mentality among my peers. Surprisingly, it is working out with me.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2007), Sports Visitor Program

2. Coaches and Sports Program Administrators¹⁴

This section of the report examines the knowledge and skills gained by the foreign coaches and sports program administrators who filled out the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey. In particular, this section covers their personal growth, where and how they have applied what they learned in their home countries, the ways they have shared their experiences on the SportsUnited program with others, and whether they have remained in contact with Americans they met while on the program.

Specifically, this section will cover coaching and playing techniques, conflict resolution and leadership skills, as well as applications of these skills at their schools, universities and communities via the creation of new projects and activities. Findings from this study reveal that the efforts and initiatives of these foreign coaches and administrators have addressed critical issues for youth (e.g., HIV/AIDS), have reached underserved groups (e.g., girls, people with disabilities) and have served to unite communities that experience ongoing sectarian divisions and conflict.

a. What They Learned

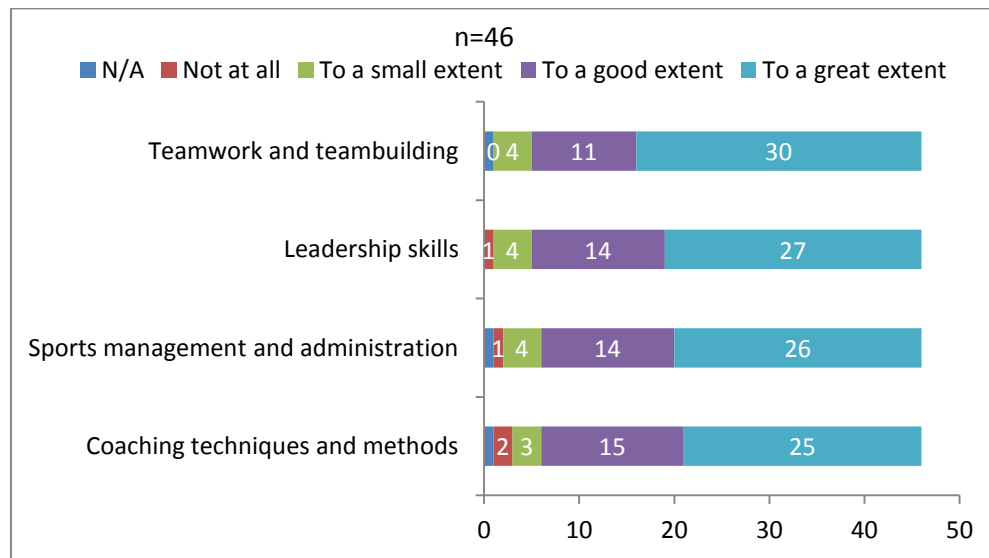
Respondents were asked to assess how much their participation in the SportsUnited program had improved their knowledge and skills in eight key areas. These skills were not exclusive, but rather built upon or reinforced the others.

Most coaches and program administrators who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey indicated four areas in which their knowledge had improved due to the program; in fact, more than half (54% or more) reported that their knowledge had improved “to a great extent” in these four areas:

- Sports management and administration
- Coaching techniques and methods
- Leadership skills
- Teamwork and teambuilding

¹⁴While 43 coaches and 10 administrators accessed the online survey (a total of 53 people), only 46 of them completed all or most of it. Results in this section are summarized for these 46 individuals.

Figure 19. Top Four Areas of Learning: Coaches and Administrators



Eight baseball coaches were interviewed in China, and all of them indicated how struck they were by the American approach to coaching youth—a philosophy that focuses on making sports simple, fun and enjoyable as a way to engage youth and to interest them in sports (field interviews, China). One participant went on to explain how this more flexible approach is something very new in China. In particular, he explained how he had begun to tailor his approach to each child—something also new to China, where coaches tend to use a standard, textbook approach for all children.

Coaches explain how the SportsUnited program improved their ability to manage and to develop sports programs.

[The Sports Visitor Program] has helped me to work on the planning, based on the four principles of coaching the youth, namely, create fun, know the reason why you are teaching a certain skill, create competition and build a youth in every one.

Coach, Baseball, South Africa (2008), Sports Visitor Program

I have learnt a lot about ways to develop programs dedicated to children, particularly poor children, as well as how to collect material and small funds to facilitate purchasing sports material and making new sports options possible for the kids.

Coach, Baseball, Brazil (2009), Sports Grants Program

[The Sports Visitor Program] improved my ... knowledge, ability to organise, plan and manage sports teams[.] [The program] built my relationship with players, coaches and administrators from the United States[.] [I] shared my culture with others [and] learned how to use sports to address problems faced by youth.

Coach, Soccer, country unknown (2009), Sports Visitor Program

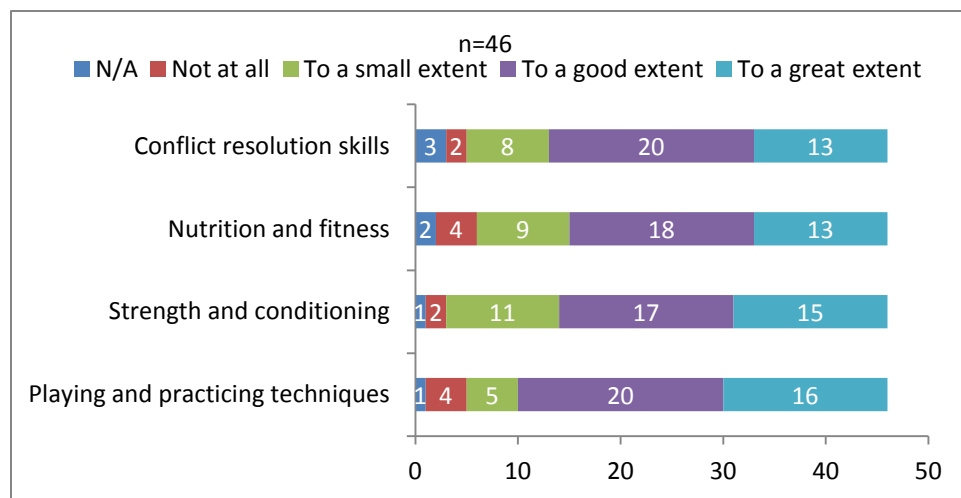
Fundraising in order to contribute and cover my costs [for] the KLF Athletics and Academics camps in back-to-back years was a great personal achievement.

Coach, Basketball, country unknown (2010), Sports Grants Program

As shown in Figure 20, most coaches and program administrators responding to the online survey indicated that their knowledge had improved in the four additional areas listed below. However, no more than 35 percent of respondents reported that their knowledge had improved “to a great extent” in these areas.

- Conflict resolution skills
- Nutrition and fitness
- Strength and conditioning
- Playing and practicing techniques

Figure 20. Additional Areas of Learning: Coaches and Administrators



Coaches and Administrators learned many playing and training techniques on the SportsUnited program(s).

It [the Sports Visitor Program] also helped me guide the drills I give to beginners, as I had never been instructed in a systematic manner on how to transfer the skills to kids before.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2009), Sports Visitor Program

[I learned] track and field training, including training theories, rehab after injuries, athlete sleep and rest issues, [and] athlete mental training.

Coach, Track and Field, Jordan (2009), Sports Grants Program

We have learnt a lot about new techniques in games and training, besides some ways to improve techniques we already performed.

Coach, Baseball, Brazil (2009), Sports Grants Program

I played better than before and carr[ied] back more ways [of playing] to my university.

Coach, Baseball, China (2007), Sports Visitor Program

I now convince my students, who are children, to avoid eating harmful foods such as potato chips and coke, and linking that to the sports class. ... I have also started using some teaching methods that I learned in the United States.

Coach, Volleyball, Jordan (2009), Sports Grants Program

We met a coach of Futsal giving training [to] the young girls [at] schools; we discussed many thing[s] about the game and asked about the rules and regulations of the game. Our Pakistani girls learned and adopted in the training of 02-day sessions and showed their ability of learning and interest towards the sports.

Sports Program Administrator, Soccer, Pakistan (2009), Sports Visitor Program

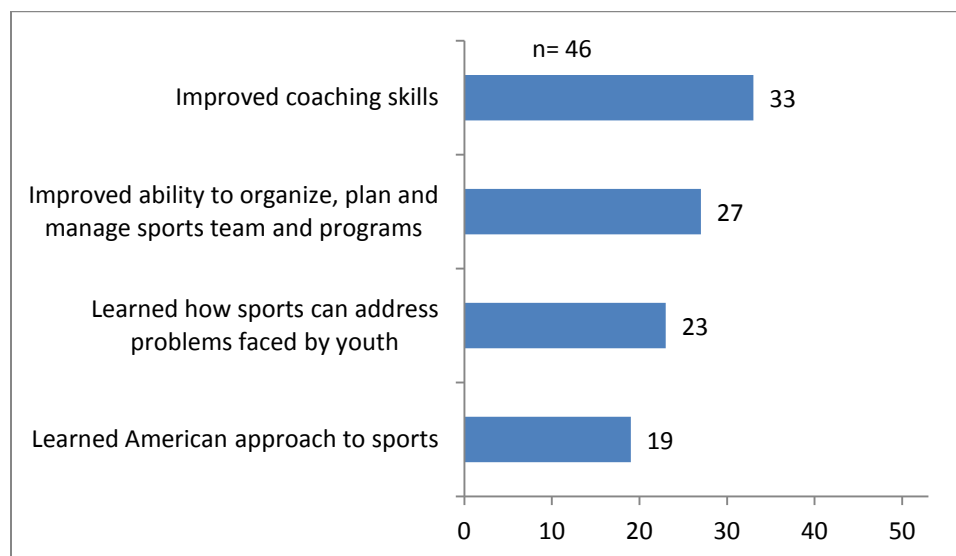
b. What They Have Accomplished

Coaches and program administrators who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey were asked to identify the *three most important accomplishments* resulting from their participation in a SportsUnited program. Four areas were singled out by the greatest numbers of respondents:

- Improved coaching skills
- Improved ability to organize, plan and manage sports teams and programs
- Learning how sports can be used to address problems faced by youth
- Learning American approaches to sports

The majority of coaches and program administrators reported that their coaching skills (72%) and/or their ability to organize, plan and manage sports teams and programs (59%) had improved. Furthermore, they considered these to be areas of accomplishment that they had applied back home.

Figure 21. Most Cited Areas of Accomplishments: Coaches and Administrators



In addition, more than a third of respondents (41%) indicated that learning the American approach to sports was an instrumental accomplishment.

Applying ideas from the United States has been important for work in their home countries.

[Learning about] the ideas and new techniques in sports exercised in the United States—that helped me a lot [to] copy that into our region.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2007), Sports Visitor Program

[I had a] personal re-orientation about American culture, acquisition of scientifically sound information about coaching principles in soccer, and the use of sports as instruments of transformation among youths.

Coach, Soccer, Nigeria (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Learn[ing] the ways [of] how to put new girls in[to] the game [of] soccer [was my most important achievement].

Sports Program Administrator, Soccer, Pakistan (2009), Sports Visitor Program

As shown in Figure 21, half of the respondents (50%) reported that one of their top three areas of accomplishment was learning how sports can be utilized effectively to address problems faced by youth. Two SportsUnited Grassroot Soccer Grant programs focused on raising awareness and prevention of HIV by using soccer, and sports in general, as a vehicle to reach youth. A participant from South Africa explained that he had visited a nongovernmental organization in

the United States, MetroTeen, that engages youth by sending young people door to door to discuss HIV/AIDS. Upon his return home, he served as a leader on a 16-day door-to-door campaign to address issues of violence against women, and as a resource in his community concerning speaking openly about HIV/AIDS (field interview, South Africa).

Sports Program Administrators explain how SportsUnited has helped them address critical social issues for youth.

I learned to work with handicapped children, something that I never in my life imagined that I would do, and [I learned] how important they are and that these children can have a moment of recreation...

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, Nicaragua (2008), Sports Grants Program

[My most important achievement has been] to be able to go back to the communities I live in and share the knowledge I have about [the] HI[V] Virus through soccer.... [N]ow I can talk to younger people about HIV without their raising their parents' ears, because I use soccer as a medium of expression.

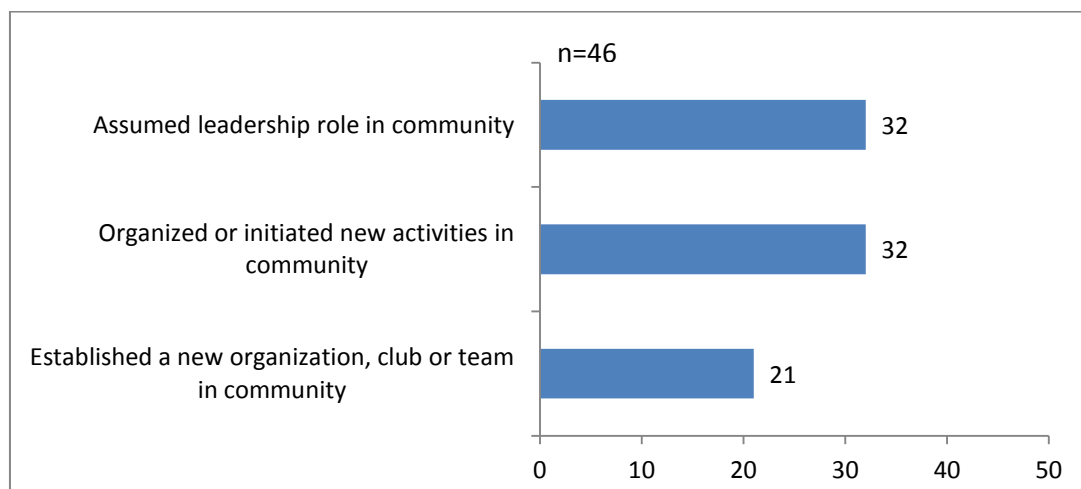
Sports Program Administrator, Soccer, South Africa (2008), Sports Grants Program

c. Community Work

Sixty-nine percent of the coaches and program administrators who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey indicated that they had organized or initiated new activities and projects, and/or had assumed a leadership role or position in their community. Close to half (46%) reported having established new organizations, clubs or teams in their community.

One baseball coach in China founded a baseball club (a nonprofit) for poor children and subsequently hired 4–5 baseball coaches to teach in the club. He explained that he was inspired, on his visit to the United States as a Sports Visitor, when he saw poor children and children from minority groups participating in sports academies in Louisiana and Maryland (field interview, China).

Figure 22. Community Work: Coaches and Administrators



Coaches provided examples of how they succeeded in bringing diverse groups together in countries known for sectarian and/or religious tensions, by reaching out and forming sports programs in underserved areas and/or for underserved groups.

Lebanese Coaches comment on how they have worked to bring youth from different groups and communities together.

[I] have been involved in running/coaching basketball camps at community levels in different regions and got the opportunity to train beginners and young players on different techniques. It also created the opportunity to mix diverse groups, to introduce the concepts of accepting others among the kids and emphasizing the importance of sports [in] their social lives.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2009), Sports Visitor Program

We gathered Lebanese athletes later here in Lebanon for many basketball camps and events, which opened opportunities for many teenagers.... Most importantly [we] united athletes from different religions and communities under the name of SportsUnited.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2007), Sports Visitor Program

Comments from the surveys reveal that coaches and sports program administrators worked to create new programs and activities for girls, the underserved groups in their communities and people with disabilities. One Sports Grant participant in South Africa began working with the Corporate Social Responsibility Division of Volkswagen South Africa, which has a partnership with the South African Ministry of Sports and Culture (field interview, South Africa).

Coaches have created programs in rural areas and underserved areas.

The most important achievement was the [b]asketball clinic program initiated in 2010–2011 in the rural parts of Lebanon.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2009), Sports Visitor Program

When I came back to Iraq, I was—and I still am—equipped with a lot of skills that qualify me to work on a lot of development projects in sports, if there is anyone to help me ... I work with the GSP organization, and we helped thousands of children and sports instructors in schools as well as coaches in clubs, in Kurdistan ... We helped them increase their skills and abilities, as well as their life skills to be better people.

Coach, Basketball, Iraq (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Coaches and Sports Program Administrators have started programs for people with disabilities.

I have started a small exercise program for persons with disabilities here in South Africa.

Coach, Sports for People with Disabilities, South Africa (2009), Sports Grants Program

I started an informal nonprofit recreation group called "[P]lay time," which aims to enhance and embrace the potential of disabled individuals in Pretoria, Gauteng, through recreational and sporting activities. I started facilitating an annual event called "Life with a wheelchair seminar," which aims to educate the community about disabled individuals, give them an opportunity to experience the disabled sports industry and interact with these individuals. [I] also provide the opportunity for disabled children from less fortunate circumstances to engage in sport and recreational activities and learn the benefits of development, recreation and sport in everyday life.

Sports Program Administrator, Sports for People with Disabilities, South Africa (2010), Sports Grants Program

A Sports Program Administrator works with girls.

[I have] train[ed] girls in [the] communities [in] sports, leadership and volunteer work. ... [I have] succeed[ed] in making girls more interested in sport[s] and education, creating leaders in my community [so] that they [the girls] share their competencies with other children with different abilities.

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, Nicaragua (2008), Sports Grants Program

Some sports program administrators built on their experiences in the SportsUnited program by developing new training systems and planning sports events appropriate for their home countries and communities. One individual whom the evaluation team met in South Africa singled out their experience observing different program models on their trip to the United States as particularly helpful.

Sports Program Administrators have applied their skills to develop new training systems and to plan socially oriented sporting events.

I develop[ed] a system of training so strength conditioning and also peer interaction and motivation [could] be more effective and also lesion [injury] prevention educational mini-lectures. Currently I am trying to apply those skills in a community where I am working with Centro Cultural Guanin.

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, Dominican Republic (2008), Sports Grants Program

The Program has helped me plan sporting events for social purposes.

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, Brazil (2009), Sports Grants Program

Some program administrators indicated that after the SportsUnited exchange, they were able to shape new strategies and approaches to sports based on their experiences on the program.

Sports Program Administrators reflect on how they have broadened their view of the role of sports in their own communities.

Firstly my experience really helped me, because whenever we brainstorm, I will come with a broader perspective [in] community meeting[s], program implementation and event organizing.

Sports Program Administrator, Soccer, South Africa (2008), Sports Grants Program

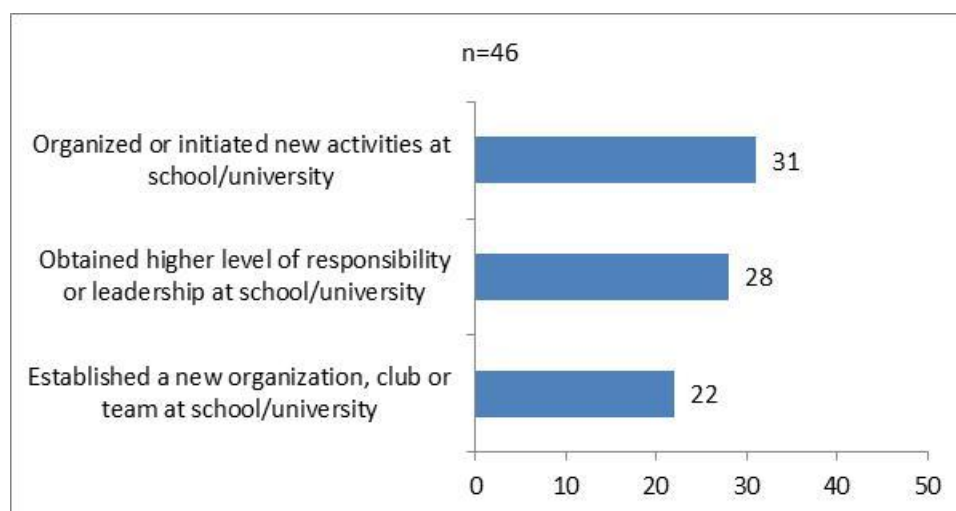
Well, in my country, they always say that men are better at sports. I would like to see women become the force for more interchange [exchange], people who are just starting out and are full of the will to learn, with scarce financial resources, [people who are] leaders and volunteers in their communities.

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, Nicaragua (2008), Sports Grants Program

d. Work in the School/University

More than 60 percent of the foreign coaches and sports administrators who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey reported having initiated new activities or projects (67%) at their school/university and/or having obtained a leadership position or a job with a higher level of responsibility (61%) where they work. About half of the respondents (48%) reported having established new organizations or clubs at their school/university.

Figure 23. Work in School/University: Coaches and Administrators



A coach from Tanzania explains the types of new activities that he/she developed at school.

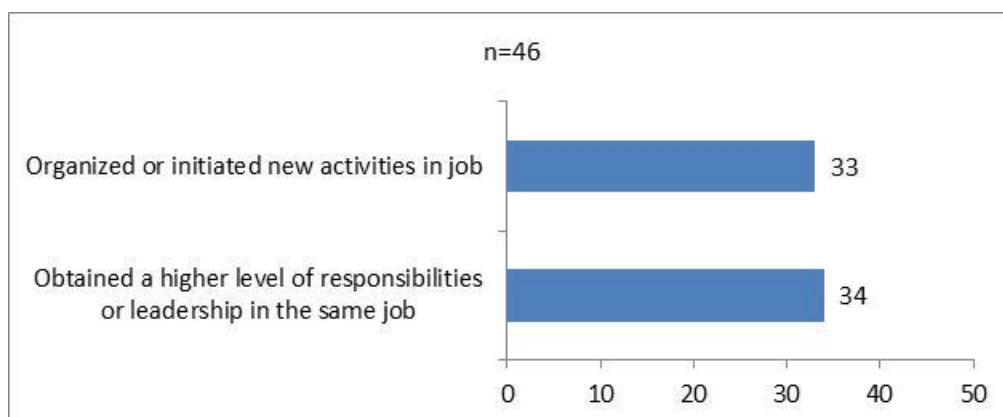
[SportsUnited has] help[ed] me [in] planning and applying some ... programs to my school PE Department as [a] PE Teacher at Mirongo Secondary School, improving [the] techniques and skills [of] my players as coach of [the] Bugando Worrious and Bugando Planet Basketball Club, as well as helping [me in] planning and conducting different youth sports programs [for] sport teachers from primary and secondary schools through our organization, which [is] known as Planet Social [D]evelopment (PSD), as [the] Sports Director[.]

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

e. Career Advancement and Personal Growth

Nearly three-quarters of the foreign coaches and program administrators who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey reported that they had obtained a higher level of responsibility or leadership (74%) and/or had initiated new activities or projects (72%) in their current job.

Figure 24. Job Responsibilities: Coaches and Administrators



Two coaches reflect on how their careers have changed as a result of their participation in SportsUnited.

[I am] self-confident [in] my coaching ability. [I have] produced national & international basketball players, [and I have been] selected as a Coach [for the] Bangladesh National Basketball Team[.]

Coach, Basketball, Bangladesh (2007), Sports Grants Program

The most important achievement which is the result of my experience in this program is that today I am the Head Basketball Coach of the Indian women U-16 basketball team for the Asian Basketball Championship to be held in China in December 2011.

As a Coach I have immensely benefited from the teaching of the [g]reat American [c]oaches, which gives me a[n] edge over the other [c]oaches.

Coach, Basketball, India (2010), Sports Grants Program

Both foreign coaches and sports administrators who filled out a survey noted that the SportsUnited program had contributed to improved self-confidence.

Coaches reflect on how the SportsUnited program helped transform them into more confident professionals.

I realized that personal initiative [plays an] essential role in building a sound [a]thletic environment.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2007), Sports Visitor Program

It has enhanced my self-esteem by providing me with more safety in developing methodologies to be applied in sporting, educational and social-cultural activities.

Coach, Soccer, Brazil (2009), Sports Grants Program

[I] am a more mature [m]anager, and that pushed me to get my Master degree in Sports Marketing and Communication.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2009), Sports Visitor Program

I'm now recognized as a coach in my country and now [am] involved with the [n]ational coaches. It has also helped [me] to carry myself confidently as an historically disadvantaged person.

Coach, Baseball, South Africa (2008), Sports Visitor Program

Sports Program Administrators explain how SportsUnited affected them personally, increasing their self-confidence.

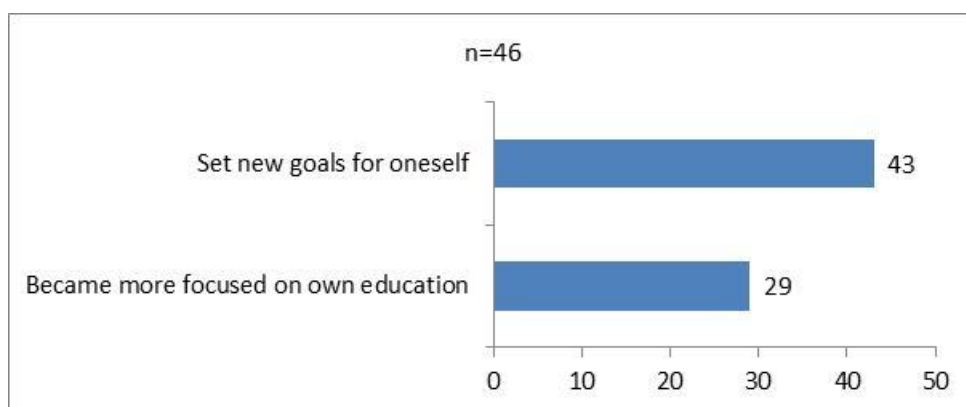
[I gained] broader perspective [on] how to handle the programs and using the international experience ... [I gained] confidence and self-efficacy.

Sports Program Administrator, Soccer, South Africa (2008), Sports Grants Program

It has improved almost every aspect of my everyday life. I strive to be the best, and being around individuals that are in essence the best in the world in this relevant field was exhilarating. It added an immense amount to what steps I am taking at the moment to improve the disabled sports industry in South Africa, the awareness and overall well-being. The experience was absolutely amazing and a great learning curve.

Sports Program Administrator, Sports for People with Disabilities, South Africa (2010), Sports Grants Program

Figure 25. Personal Growth: Coaches and Administrators



Most foreign coaches and program administrators who filled out a survey indicated that they had changed on a personal level after the SportsUnited program—in fact, almost all of them (93%) reported having set new goals for themselves, and almost two-thirds (63%) reported having become more focused on their own education. For example, one administrator who participated in a Sports for People with Disabilities grant program reported having gained “inspiration to further my career and studies in sport for persons with disabilities” (survey respondent, Sports Grants Program, Czech Republic, 2009).

Moreover, some foreign coaches articulated what they had learned in terms of the importance of linking sports to academic achievement and using them as a tool to help youth.

One interviewee in South Africa, who had participated in a Grassroot Soccer Grant program, described visiting an organization in the United States, DC SCORES, and experiencing how this group provides sports programs to youth in a disadvantaged community while at the same time providing teachers to help the children with their homework (field interview, South Africa). This participant went on to explain that this model had helped him/her to understand a “new way” of linking sports to education, and even had motivated him/her to write to the partner organization in the United States in order to try to develop a similar initiative in South Africa.

Coaches now understand the importance of linking sports to education as a way to encourage academic success.

[I realized that] first, always sports go together with education, for the one who participate[s] much in sports, obviously his/her performance in education will be high ...

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

[An important thing] I learned[ed] about [is] the relationship between parents, students and teachers in academic matters as well as [in] sports.

Coach, Basketball, country unknown (2009), Sports Visitor Program

[An important achievement of mine is] to encourage youth and their parents about the importan[ce] of sports in relation to academic matters.

Coach, Basketball, country unknown (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Sports Program Administrators single out the importance of sports together with education to better the lives of youth.

[I gained] awareness of the huge interest in education and service. Personally my compromise with [commitment to] the community and sports has deepen[ed].

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, country unknown (2008), Sports Grants Program

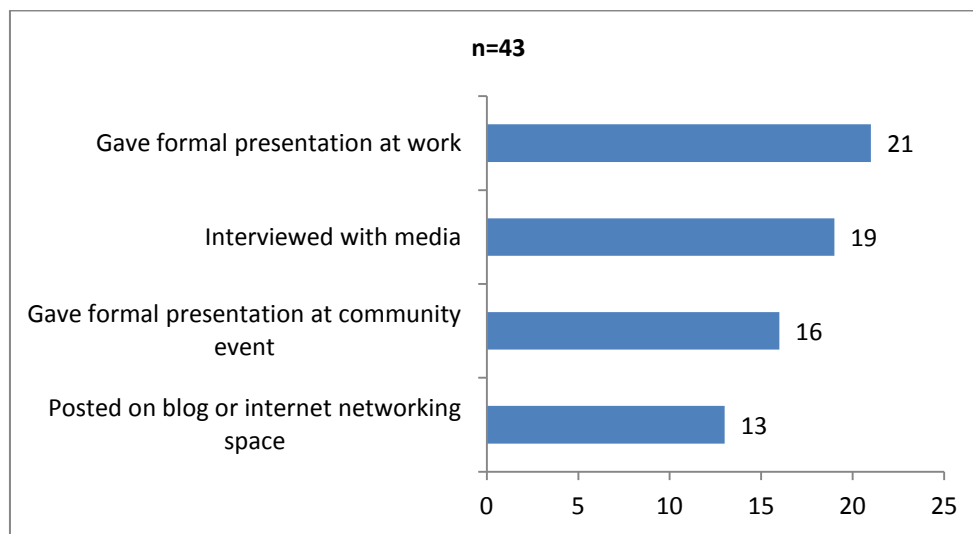
[I gained an] awareness of how important sport is as a tool to assist in educating/organizing human beings, [e]specially the youth. [SportsUnited] has provided tools that gave me awareness [of] the power we have in our hands to help the community.

Sports Program Administrator, Baseball, Dominican Republic (2008), Sports Grants Program

f. Sharing Experiences with Others¹⁵

Respondents were asked if they had shared their experience or knowledge gained on the SportsUnited program. Close to half indicated that they had made formal presentations at work (49%) and/or had given interviews with the media (44%). Although not as common, approximately one-third or more had given formal presentations at community events (37%) and/or had posted on a blog or Internet networking site (30%).

Figure 26. Sharing Experiences with Others: Coaches and Administrators

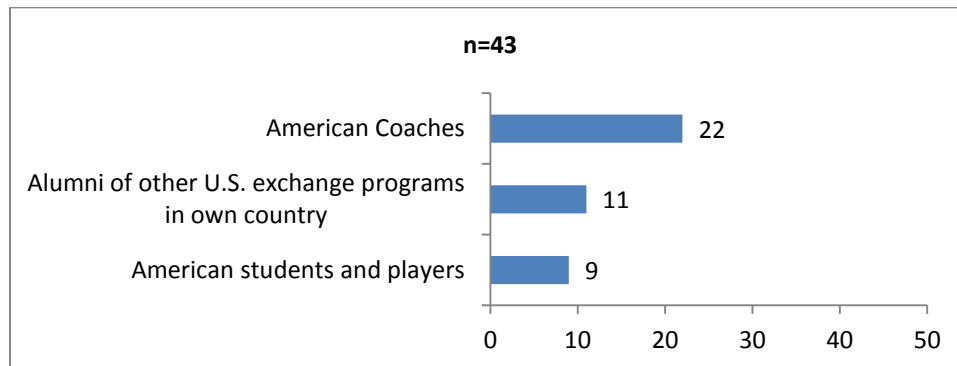


¹⁵At this point in the survey, only 43 individuals provided responses. Results for these 43 individuals are discussed in the remaining sections.

g. Contact with Americans and Others

Roughly half (51%) of the foreign coaches and sports administrators who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey reported having been in contact with coaches they had met in the United States after returning home. In addition, more than 20 percent of the respondents reporting having been in contact with American students and players and/or with others from their country who had participated in a U.S. exchange program.

Figure 27. Maintaining Contact: Coaches and Administrators



[My most important achievement was] building relationships with other coaches and sports administrators from the United States, including instructors from UCLA University [sic] and Cal Poly Pomona University.

Coach, Track and Field, Jordan (2009), Sports Grants Program

Coaches and Sports Program Administrators have reached out to U.S. peers and have stayed in touch with SportsUnited Envoys.

As soon as [I] came back to Tanzania, I managed to organize [a] [s]ports clinic for coaches through the American Swimming Coaches Association[.] I [was] also involved in [a] [b]asketball clinic with other organizations organized for youth age[d] 9–17.

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Well, after the visit [Sports Visitor Program] in July 2009, we received a visit of Sports Envoy[s]: Mme. Donna Orender, Mr. Rolando Blackman and Miss Ebony Hoffman, and after[wards] we stayed in contact with all three of them, and while [on] [an]other visit to Lebanon, Mr. Blackman staged a Clinic for Kids. In the summer of 2010, Coach Stan Brudish, whom we met during our visit, was invited to Lebanon, and he staged a 1-week [b]asketball clinic for Lebanese kids.

Coach, Basketball, Lebanon (2009), Sports Visitor Program

I discussed with San Antonio Spurs how we can have link[s] and collect good players from Tanzania, [and] I am in the program to send some video from players I watched and coach them. I still have discussion[s] with Kelli Davis [Sports Envoy] to ... let her know [how] I am doing in my communities[.] I establish[ed] [a] link with Basketball Classic of Rockville to see how we can [create] an exchange basketball program; I opened [a] discussion with [the] PE basketball coach from Thomas Jefferson School of San Antonio to see how we can establish [an] exchange program in basketball for our youth ... I want to run [a] project [entitled] Basketball Changes Girls [so that] I [can] share the experience [I had] with [the] women of SALEG of San Antonio, TX. I have [had] discussion[s] with Georgetown University (Hoyas) to see how we can join studies to [their] university and send players for [a] scholarship.

Coach, Basketball, Tanzania (2009), Sports Visitor Program

I am still in contact with the individuals that I met in the US regarding management, sport participation, programs, etc., and hope to one day facilitate another exchange...

Sports Program Administrator, Sports for People with Disabilities, South Africa (2010), Sports Grants Program



Colombian Basketball Sports Visitors meet with NBA players

h. Conclusions: Coaches and Sports Program Administrators

The SportsUnited programs provide foreign coaches and sports program administrators a unique opportunity to learn about the American approach to coaching youth and to develop and/or to enhance their coaching techniques/methods, leadership skills and teambuilding skills. Additionally, coaches and administrators acquire concrete management and administration skills that enable them to develop and to maintain sports programs and initiatives upon their return home, as well as to manage sports teams.

Many survey respondents reported that on the SportsUnited programs, they learned how sports can be effective in addressing problems faced by youth, and a majority of them have organized new activities or projects in their home communities and schools, such as sports clubs and sports camps engaging underserved groups (e.g., girls, people with disabilities) and bringing together youth from different ethnic communities. Moreover, many coaches and administrators now fully understand the importance of linking sports to education in order to encourage academic success.

Most of the survey respondents indicated that they had obtained more job responsibility and that participation in the SportsUnited program had increased their self-confidence as professionals. Coaches and sports administrators shared what they had learned on the program with others, primarily through formal presentations at work; some also gave interviews with the media. Finally, many of the respondents reported having maintained contact with American coaches and others they met while on the SportsUnited program.

3. Youth Athletes¹⁶

This section of the report presents the survey findings reflecting what SportsUnited youth athletes learned on the Sports Visitor and Sports Grants programs, their personal growth and, in particular, their increased awareness of other cultures. In addition, this section examines where the athletes applied what they learned (i.e., in their schools and communities), the ways in which they shared their experiences on the SportsUnited program with others, and whether they have remained in contact with Americans they met.

a. What They Learned

Youth athletes were asked to assess how much their participation in the SportsUnited program had improved their knowledge and skills in eight key areas. All nine youth athletes who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey indicated five areas in which their knowledge had improved due to the program:

- Teamwork and teambuilding
- Leadership skills
- Conflict resolution skills
- Strength and conditioning
- Playing and practicing techniques

Of these, seven or more of the nine youth athletes indicated that their knowledge had increased “to a great extent” in the areas of (1) teamwork and teambuilding and (2) leadership skills. Six youth athletes indicated that their knowledge had improved “to a great extent” in terms of conflict resolution skills.

¹⁶While the youth athletes tended to provide fewer and shorter written comments on the survey, the answers they did furnish on the open-ended questions are insightful in terms of what they learned on the program, as well as some of their achievements. Of the 11 youth athletes who accessed the online survey, 9 completed it. In this section, results are summarized for these nine individuals.

Youth athletes detail learning in key areas.

Leadership:

[I] was able to hone my leadership skills during the program, during which my passion for sports also increased.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Pakistan (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Playing techniques:

[I learned that] in sports, we must be brave enough to try anything in order to improve [ourselves] and improve [our] skills in terms of technique and game skills. We can also improve self-discipline and constantly strive in doing something. Apart from that, concentration can also be sharpened.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Malaysia (2010), Sports Grants Program

I gained better skills, and I am more skilled in several techniques. Other than that, through my good skills I am more confident in training and during competition.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Malaysia (2010), Sports Grants Program

Teamwork and problem solving:

I learned how to play on a team. ... I learned new ways to handle difficult situations on [the] court.

Youth Athlete, Basketball, Lebanon (2006), Sports Visitor Program

[I learned] solving problems independently.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Uzbekistan (2006), Sports Visitor Program

b. What They Have Accomplished

Only one area was cited as a top accomplishment by a majority of youth athletes (eight of nine)—improvement in playing skills and techniques.

Close to half of the youth athletes (four of nine) singled out four other areas among their top accomplishments:

- Sharing their culture with others
- Building relationships with players, coaches and administrators from the United States
- Learning about the American approach to sports
- Improving self-confidence

When asked to identify what they had been able to apply from the SportsUnited program, these respondents singled out six key areas, which can be grouped broadly into two categories:

(1) technical skills of playing and training for a sport and (2) social skills.

Almost all the youth athletes (eight of nine) singled out three key areas of technical achievement:

- Improved playing and practicing techniques
- Strength and conditioning
- Nutrition and fitness

In addition, most of the youth athletes (at least seven of nine) cited three types of social skills as areas of achievement:

- Teamwork and teambuilding
- Leadership skills
- Conflict resolution skills

Four Youth Athletes comment on their accomplishments as a result of SportsUnited.

Technical Skills:

[My experience in the Sports Visitor Program has affected me] through nutrition and fitness; at] first I didn't know how much these things are important in a player['s] life; now I care about both of the[se] things, which has helped in my sport.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Pakistan (2009), Sports Visitor Program

Social Skills:

[My most important achievement was] getting to know other cultures. [My experience in the Sports Visitor Program has affected my ability as a player in] the ability to communicate without speaking the same language. [I learned] cultural acceptance[.]

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Bolivia (2006), Sports Visitor Program

The important achievement that I got from the Visitors Program was to get familiar with their cultur[al] affairs, meet American [b]asketball coaches and build relationship[s] with other players.

Youth Athlete, Basketball, Afghanistan (2009), Sports Visitor Program

The cultural exchange experience I got during this program now helps me to establish connections between my nation and foreigners.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Uzbekistan (2006), Sports Visitor Program

c. Projects at School and in the Community

Although none of the youth athletes who filled out a survey provided details about their community work or changes in their role at school, most of them indicated that they had been active in these areas. Specifically, almost all of the youth athletes (eight of nine) reported having organized or initiated new activities and having assumed a leadership role at their school. In addition, six of the nine indicated that they had assumed a leadership role in their communities.

d. Personal Growth

Almost all of the youth athletes who filled out either the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey (eight of nine) indicated that their self-confidence had increased as a result of their experience in the SportsUnited program; seven of them reported that it had *increased greatly*. In particular, all of the respondents reported having become more focused on education and having set new goals for themselves.

Youth Athletes have set or achieved new goals.

I intend to submit papers to establish a soccer team of girls so that more [of the] new generation [becomes] more aware of the advantages [of] follow[ing] sports.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Malaysia (2010), Sports Grants Program

I think my experiences [in SportsUnited] helped me make it to the National Soccer Team of Pakistan, and I also became Captain in 2010.

Youth Athlete, Soccer, Pakistan (2009), Sports Visitor Program

e. Sharing Experiences with Others

A majority of the nine youth athletes reported having shared their experience or knowledge gained on the SportsUnited program with others in several ways: seven of them gave an interview with a media outlet (e.g., newspaper, television, radio or Internet); six made a formal presentation at a community event; and five taught or demonstrated new skills, techniques or concepts to others.

f. Contact with Americans and Others

Many of the youth athletes who filled out an online survey reported having been in contact with Americans since returning home. In particular, most of them (seven of nine) had been in contact with American students and players they met on the SportsUnited program. Five youth athletes also reported having contact with individuals in their country who had participated in other U.S. exchange programs.

g. Conclusions: Youth Athletes

SportsUnited youth athletes who filled out an online survey singled out five key areas of learning from the programs: (1) teamwork and teambuilding, (2) leadership skills, (3) conflict resolution skills, (4) strength and conditioning, and (5) playing techniques. Youth athletes tended to focus on playing skills, techniques for playing and practicing, and social skills such as teamwork/teambuilding, leadership and conflict resolution.

Several of the youth athletes noted that the SportsUnited program had provided them with an important opportunity to develop cultural awareness and to establish connections with individuals from other cultures. Almost all of the nine youth athletes reported that their self-confidence had increased as a result of their program experience and that they had organized new activities at their schools or universities. More than half of them reported having assumed leadership roles in their communities, and many of them reported having given interviews with the media to share their experience. Finally, most of the youth athletes reported having been in contact with American students and players they met on the program.

IV. Sports Envoy Program

Sports Envoys:

Professional U.S. athletes and coaches volunteer to be Sports Envoys overseas

A typical Envoy visit includes clinics and workshops with youth, coaches and sports program administrators. Visits include drills and teambuilding activities.

Envoys engage youth in dialogue on the importance of education, positive health practices and respect for diversity.

Envoys engage with leaders of the host country government, educators and the local business community.

A. Sports Envoys: Program Description

Sports Envoys are athletes and coaches who travel overseas to lead programs that were developed by U.S. embassies and consulates to further outreach to underserved youth audiences. These American coaches and athletes hold sports clinics for young people and their coaches, participate in community outreach activities, and engage youth in dialogue on the importance of leadership and respect for diversity. These programs target the inclusion of women and girls, as well as underserved groups. In many cases, the Envoy visits may be the first time local people meet and engage with an American.

A typical Envoy visit includes clinics and workshops of 1–2 hours in duration with youth, coaches and sports program administrators, which involve drills, teambuilding activities and dialogue on the importance of education, positive health practices and respect for diversity. Envoys include professional athletes and coaches in basketball, baseball, soccer, figure skating, volleyball, snowboarding and wrestling.¹⁷



Cal Ripken gives baseball tips to young players in Japan.



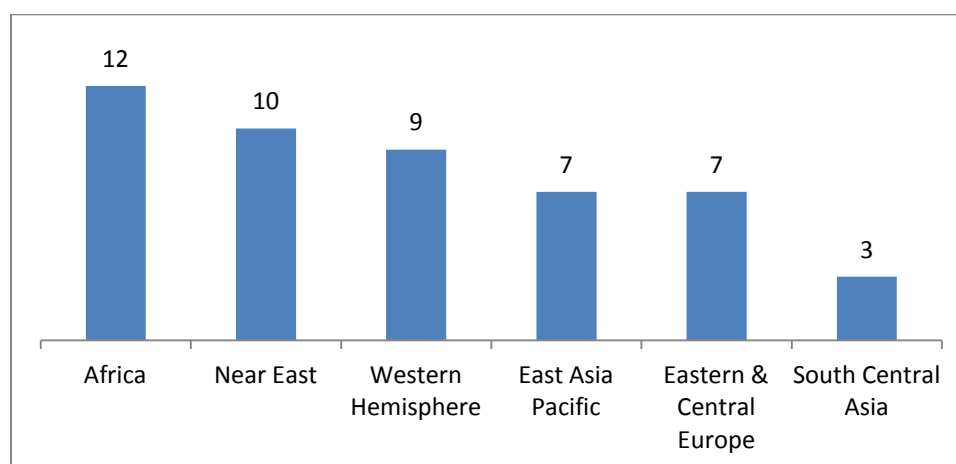
Sports Envoy Richard Dell working on technique in Manila, Philippines

¹⁷Some of the information provided on this page comes from the Sports Envoys and Sports Visitors Web site: <http://eca.state.gov/programs-initiatives/sports-diplomacy/sports-envoys-and-sports-visitors>.

B. Sports Envoys: Program Coverage

Between 2005 and 2009, the Sports Envoy years covered in this evaluation, 46 Envoy programs were held in 34 countries. While Envoys visited countries in all regions of the world, Africa and the Near East received the most visits.

Figure 28. Envoy Visits by Region¹⁸ (2005–2009)



Envoys traveled overseas in pairs, teams or individually. For example, a pair of Soccer Envoys, one female and one male, traveled to Nigeria in 2006. The U.S. wrestling team traveled to Iran in 2007. Not counting entire teams that traveled, a total of 70 individuals (37 men and 33 women) represented the United States as Sports Envoys during this period, 15 of them on more than one occasion.

During this period (2005–2009), a small group of countries received Envoys multiple times: China, Nigeria and Russia three times; and Bahrain, Colombia, Iran, Philippines, Senegal, Turkey and Uganda twice.

¹⁸A single program could visit more than one country. While there were 46 separate Sports Envoy programs, this resulted in 48 country visits.



Sports Envoy Barry Larkin demonstrates defense skills in Taiwan

From the beginning, basketball has played a pivotal role in the Sports Envoy programs. In 2005, Reebok produced 4,000 pairs of shoes that were not approved by the National Basketball Association (NBA). To ensure that someone would use the shoes, Reebok gave them to the State Department to distribute overseas. Organizing the shoe delivery led to the first Sports Envoy program in 2005, when the NBA and the WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) partnered with SportsUnited to help coordinate the project in three African countries.¹⁹

By far, basketball has been the sport represented by the greatest number of Envoy visits. During the evaluation period, a total of 19 countries received visits from Basketball Envoys (between the men's and women's teams), whereas less than 10 countries received visits from Soccer, Baseball or Figure Skating Envoys (8, 5 and 4, respectively), as shown in Table 6 below.

Many of the female Sports Envoys traveled to countries where women play a nascent role in sports, and in some cases where women's roles are more restricted generally. For example, female basketball players traveled to Saudi Arabia and the Congo (DRC). In other cases, women traveled to countries where women play wider roles in society and are beginning to make a mark in terms of sports—El Salvador, Morocco, Nigeria, Georgia and Jordan.

¹⁹Interview with SportsUnited Program Office, March 19, 2010

Table 6. Sports Envoy Visits by Sport and Country

Sport	Countries: 2005–2009
Basketball (19)	Algeria, Bahrain, Congo, Georgia, <i>Israel</i> , Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mozambique, Nigeria, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey and Uganda
Soccer (8)	Bahrain, Bolivia, El Salvador, Morocco, Nigeria, <i>Philippines</i> , South Africa and Uganda
Baseball (5)	China, Colombia, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela
Figure Skating (4)	Argentina, China, Russia and Ukraine
Wrestling	Iran
Volleyball	<i>Brazil</i>
Note: Countries highlighted in green participated in Sports Envoy programs with female Sports Envoys only. Baseball and wrestling programs were comprised solely of male Sports Envoys (i.e., no female envoys). In all other cases, women and men Sports Envoys traveled together on a Sports Envoy program.	

In addition to the Sports Envoy visits, U.S. sports players or teams also participated in “target of opportunity” SportsUnited programs of a more limited duration (i.e., half-day or full-day), which was possible because the individual or team was in a country for another reason (e.g., international competition). Three such programs occurred during the period of this evaluation: two football programs (one in Russia and one in South Korea) and one swimming program (in Turkey).



Twenty-eight of the thirty-four countries (82%) received a visit from a female athlete or coach. American women traveled abroad to provide clinics and workshops in basketball, soccer, volleyball, swimming and figure skating.

Sports Envoy Katie Smith at the YMCA in Mumbai, India

Like the other two SportsUnited programs in this evaluation, the Sports Envoy Program has grown recently. Between 2010 and 2013, there were a total of 66 Sports Envoy programs (i.e., visits) in 54 countries—a percentage increase of 59 percent over the 2005–2009 period. During the last 4 years, 232 Sports Envoys have participated (compared to 85 during the years 2005 to 2009), marking a 173 percent increase in terms of the number of American coaches and/or players who have volunteered their time and expertise to serve as goodwill ambassadors.



Sports Envoy George “The Iceman” Gervin in Mumbai, India

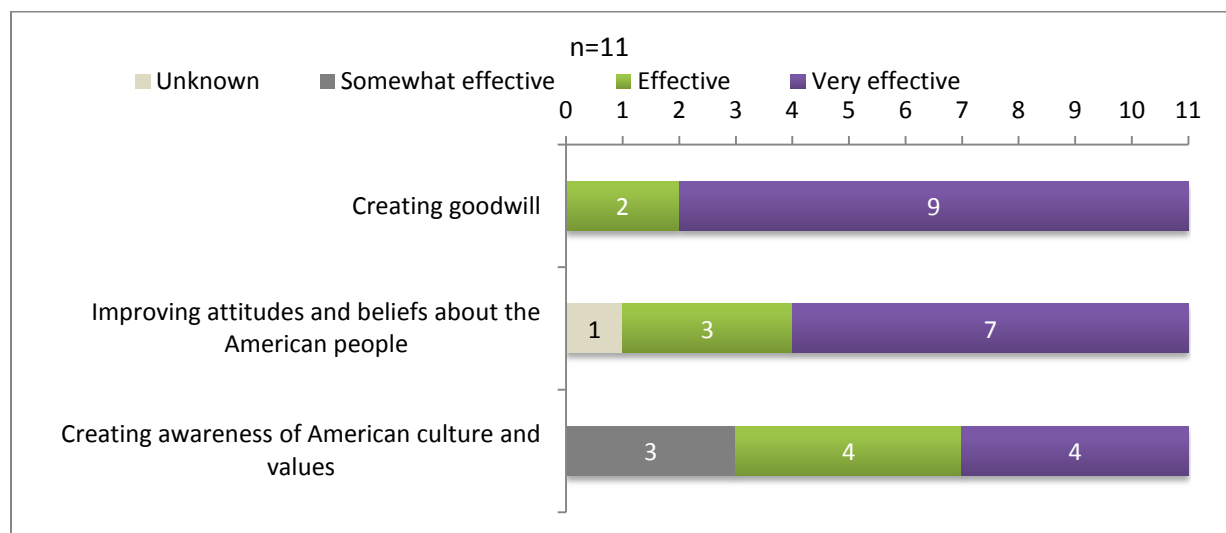
C. Findings: Sports Envoy Program

The online survey was sent to 25 Envoys, 11 of whom sent in a survey (6 women and 5 men).²⁰ Between them, the 11 Envoys visited 19 countries: Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, China, Georgia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Ukraine.

Envoys who responded to the survey were in the fields of basketball, soccer, volleyball or figure skating. Five Soccer Envoys completed the survey; they were the largest group of respondents, followed by Basketball Envoys (four).

When asked to assess the effectiveness of the Sports Envoy Program, a majority of the 11 Envoys indicated that the following specific objectives had been achieved: creating goodwill, creating awareness of American culture/values and improving attitudes towards Americans. In fact, 9 of the 11 rated the program as *very effective* in terms of creating goodwill, and 7 rated it *very effective* in improving attitudes and beliefs about the American people.

Figure 29. Mutual Understanding



Envoys shared their own experiences, as well as professional skills, to demonstrate and to reinforce key program messages:

- The importance of commitment to something
- Equal opportunity through sports
- Shared goals and needs
- The value of teamwork and communication in all aspects of life

²⁰No Envoys from the 2005 program year responded. All survey respondents were from the program years of 2006 and onward.

Envoys explained each of these messages in depth.

That we are all equal and should treat every human being regardless of race, religion, nationality, gender or anything else that serves to divide humanity with respect and affection.

Soccer, Sports Envoy, 2008 and 2009

Teamwork and communication. Even in life, what we say and how we say it extends way past sports! On the court, you have to communicate to make certain plays work ... same with life!

Volleyball, Sports Envoy, 2009

The fact that we all needed and cared about the same things in life, our families, our significant other (or in some cases OTHERS), our want to find success in our lives, big or small, the fact that we wanted to see our cultures and faith move forward. But that violence is not the overriding answer to peace, finding common ground, respecting another culture and its people, and coming to terms through a negotiating process was the way to long-lasting peace and the way to deliver decisive action against problems that will arise in the future.

Basketball, Sports Envoy, 2009



Sports Envoys Barry Larkin and Joe Logan tour Chen Ching Baseball Stadium in Taiwan with Kaohsiung County Magistrate Yang and AIT/K Branch Chief Chris Castro (left). Larkin with Taipei County Governor (right).

The Sports Envoy programs established ongoing professional relationships and contacts that resulted in specific multiplier effects, such as increased interest in a sport and local initiative and enthusiasm following a Sports Envoy's visit. This was particularly the case in China, where Cal Ripken, Jr., held a series of baseball clinics. An interviewee in China stated that schools started softball programs after a Baseball Envoy's visit in 2007, and more schools began to send their kids to play softball.

There are also cases of sustained contact in South Africa. One interviewee in South Africa stated that he had maintained contact with the managing director of the U.S. Soccer Federation, and

because of this correspondence, he coordinated the managing director's travel when he returned to South Africa. Most of the Envoys surveyed (9 of 11) reported having stayed in contact with the people and organizations they encountered during their visit, and 5 of them reported providing support (educational, technical, financial, material, etc.) to such organizations or individuals.

Interviews in the field revealed that Envoys had demonstrated skills and techniques in ways that were new to the countries.

Envoys demonstrate models of training.

The South African Football Association does not promote drills and clinics in schools, and schools do not organize sports teams as is customary in the US; therefore, because of the Envoy Program, 120 students, ages 9 to 11, were able to benefit from the drills. The students had never participated in an event like this before and were taught how to trap and pass the ball.

School Principal, South Africa, Soccer Envoy Program 2006 (field interview)

D. Conclusions: Sports Envoy Program

Between 2005 and 2009, Sports Envoys traveled to 34 countries in various regions of the world. These visits targeted often-excluded populations, such as women and girls, youth and underserved groups, through sports. Female sports figures traveled extensively—to 28 countries—as Envoys to promote a more active role for women and girls in sports.

In addition to demonstrations and clinics on sports skills, teambuilding and fitness, the Sports Envoys carried positive messages of determination, leadership, tolerance and cross-cultural communication. In some cases, these Envoy visits represented the first time some youth overseas had ever met an American personally. When asked to reflect on the program and their own experience, Sports Envoys expressed the belief that the programs actively create goodwill overseas and strengthen positive attitudes towards Americans and awareness of American culture.

V. Conclusions: SportsUnited Programs

All three SportsUnited programs covered in this study have had a profound impact on participants. Foreign program participants who came to the United States with either a Sports Visitor or Sports Grant program reported that their exchange experience had deepened their understanding of U.S. culture, people and values, as well as provided them with new skills and knowledge that they were able to apply back home. At the same time, American Sports Envoys who traveled overseas communicated key American values, such as the importance of tolerance and inclusion, to the individuals and organizations who participated in their activities. In some cases, local organizations were inspired by the Envoy visits to establish or to increase sports programs.

Many of the respondents to the Sports Visitor and Sports Grants surveys—including foreign coaches, sports program administrators and youth athletes—were struck by the extent to which U.S. society embodies inclusion and diversity (race, religion, gender and physical abilities), both in general and in the field of sports. Other key areas of learning for respondents (youth athletes, coaches and administrators) included leadership skills and teambuilding skills. In addition, coaches and administrators learned how sports can be effective in addressing problems faced by youth. As such, many coaches and administrators applied these key areas of learning after returning home, either by initiating sports programs that engage underserved groups (e.g., girls or people with disabilities) or by bringing together youth from different ethnic communities.

Sports Envoy visits overseas often target excluded populations, such as women and girls, youth and underserved groups. In fact, during the evaluation period, female Envoys traveled to 28 countries to promote a more active role for women and girls in sports. The majority of Envoy survey respondents agreed that the programs help to promote goodwill and positive attitudes towards Americans, as well as awareness of American culture.

Foreign coaches, administrators and youth athletes (responding to the Sports Visitor or Sports Grants survey) developed personally and professionally as a result of their program participation. In terms of personal growth, most survey respondents gained increased self-confidence. In terms of professional development, most of the coaches and administrators in the surveys reported that they had obtained a higher level of job responsibility, while the majority of youth athletes in the surveys reported that they had assumed leadership roles in their communities.

Sports Visitor and Sports Grants survey respondents also shared their program experiences with others. For example, several coaches, administrators and youth athletes gave media interviews, and many coaches and administrators also made formal presentations at work.

Across all three programs, respondents have maintained contact with people they met on the program, thus establishing cross-cultural relationships. In the case of Envoys, several respondents established ongoing relationships with the local organizations they met overseas, to which they have provided ongoing support—educational, technical or financial—after the program.